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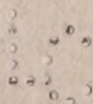
# GREEN ISLAND;

A

TALE FOR YOUTH.

BY

ALFRED F. P. KIRBY.



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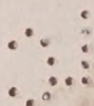
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# THE GREEN ISLAND.

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## CHAPTER I.

**M**OTHER of God! Mother of Mercy!  
Be a Mother to our Reginald! Star  
of Ocean, shine on him now, and  
guide him to a haven of safety  
and rest!"

Such was the fervent prayer of Gertrude de Tracey, as she stood with her husband at the door of their solitary dwelling, which, situated on the Sussex coast, at a short distance from the beach, commanded an extensive seaward view. Their only son Reginald was far away on the sea, and as they watched the angry waters beat upon the shore, and listened to the mournful voice of the gathering storm, they feared for the peril and trembled for the safety of their child.

On that same day, and in that very hour, the voice of one in danger, far away on the

distant Pacific Ocean, rose wildly above the roaring of the tempest, "Mother of Mercy! Help of Christians! Pray for me! Jesus! Mercy! Mary! Help!" he cried, as he clung to the broken mast of the sinking ship, he and one other, the friend and companion of his youth, the only survivors of the gallant crew. Those who had taken to the boats, unable to contend with the fury of the elements, had perished within sight of the ship; of those who had remained on board, all but these two had been swept from the deck by the resistless force of the waves.

Again a mighty wave poured in upon the deck, and again the loud cry, "Mother of Mercy, help!" rose amid the storm, for the faithful client of Mary, in the horror of that hour, next to his firm hope in the saving mercy of the Most High, relied with unflinching confidence on the powerful intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mother. "Mother of Mercy!" he cried, in accents of holy hope, "pray for thy servant Reginald."

Yes, it was Reginald de Tracey who was thus crying out for help to her whom no one



ever invoked in vain, and at the same hour, in far off England, his anxious parents were on his behalf calling upon the same sweet advocate. The tempest still raged, the thunder rolled, the red lightnings flashed fearfully over the waves. It was an awful interval of terror and dismay. Far as the eye could reach over the wide waste of waters no land could be discerned, no sail appeared in sight; but the child of Mary did not despair, and again and again the cry, "Mother of Mercy, help!" was borne by angels up to her starry throne.

"Pray as loud as you like, strain your voice to its highest pitch, calling out for help," at length exclaimed his companion, who had hitherto appeared sunken in silent despair; "help for us, I tell you, there is none. A few moments and we shall be swallowed up. If you had not held me back I might have got into the boat; but whilst you have been preaching and praying, the boat drifted away and I saw no more of her, and so I may thank you for all the good I have to expect from your prayers."

"Hubert! Hubert!" cried Reginald, "speak



not thus. Have you forgotten how often we have knelt before the altar of our Lady together, how many favors we have both obtained, in times past, through her intercession?"

"But she helps us not now," was the ungracious reply, "now when we are in most need of assistance. Has her intercession lost its power?"

"Hubert!" exclaimed Reginald, "her intercession is all powerful with that Divine Son of hers, at Whose almighty command the tempest ceased and there came a great calm."

"But, can she save us now, when the next moment may be our last?"

"She is the Mother of God," was Reginald's reply, as he drew from his bosom, and devoutly kissed the Rosary his mother had given him on the day of his first communion.

"Mother of Mercy," said he, "pray for my unhappy friend. What will become of him if he perishes in dispositions so unhallowed?"

"Pray on," shouted Hubert, "expect miraculous deliverance till the foaming



waters sweep thee from the deck. I will act a braver part, make a bold effort, and trust to my own good strength.”

Whilst he spoke he withdrew his grasp from the rocking mast, and apparently in the hope of escaping ingulphment in the whirling vortex which would soon follow the disappearance of the now rapidly sinking vessel, he uttered a loud shout of self-encouragement and plunged into the roaring water.

Reginald raised his eyes to heaven. “Mother of Mercy, help him,” trembled upon his lips, while he clung more firmly himself to the tottering mast.

A wild, loud shriek of horror rose the next moment from the deep. It was the despairing cry of the wretched Hubert.

“A shark! a shark!” he frantically exclaimed; “Mother of Mercy! help! help!”

It was a moment of unutterable horror.

Reginald tried to speak but the effort died away in inaudible murmurs on his lips. He listened for a repetition of the cry, but heard only the howling of the storm.

A chillness came over him, his eyes grew dim, his soul shuddered with fearful appre-



hension for Hubert's terrible fate. He thought of his own tremendous peril, of his fond father, of his tender mother, of his happy home, and his heart sank within him but he thought also of his Heavenly Father, of the sweet Mother of Mercy, and of the true home above, and a beam of hope and holy joy passed through his soul.

But his physical powers were exhausted, his hands were benumbed, he was no longer able to grasp the mast; he crossed his arms in resignation, murmured, "Lord Jesus, save me, or I perish. Mother of Mercy, pray for me. Blessed Joseph, and thou, my holy angel—" His voice failed, and he dropped apparently lifeless, at the foot of the reeling mast.

The following morning dawned bright and cloudless. The sea, now smooth as a polished mirror, glistened in the bright rays of the rising sun, and the light-winged breeze softly sighing on the perfumed air, murmured sweet responses to the matin hymn of numerous singing birds, whose joyous notes arose in harmonious chorus from a small woody islet, covered with verdure



and watered by a single river, pure and clear, that wound its silver current through a charming little valley enamelled with flowers of the richest tints, still sparkling with the dew-drops of early morning.

On the shore stood a young man of extraordinary beauty, supporting a youth who was apparently just recovering from a state of insensibility in which he had been rescued from a watery grave. \*

Reginald de Tracey's cry to God and our Lady and his holy guardian angel, had not been uttered in vain. "Mother of Mercy, help!" was mingled with what had seemed his parting breath as he dropped at the foot of the mast, and he was snatched from the waves in the very moment when he was on the point of sinking to rise no more.

The sweet mild voice of the noble stranger, speaking words of hope and consolation while watching over him with untiring care, soon recalled Reginald to a sense of his happy deliverance from the perils of the sea, and sinking down on his knees, he raised to heaven his eyes, overflowing with tears of love and gratitude, and gave thanks to God



for his wonderful preservation. He thanked the Mother of Mercy, too, for he justly attributed his escape to her all-prevailing intercession with her Divine Son.

And then, turning to the stranger who so charitably administered to him, he said:

“Who art thou that so kindly triest to comfort me?”

“I am the servant of her whom thou lovest,” was the reply, “the devout client of Mary must ever be dear to those who bow down before her maternal sovereignty. Reginald de Tracey, thou didst not appeal to her in vain. The Mother of Mercy was thy safeguard amidst the perils that encompassed thee. She pleaded for thee before the throne of God, and the cause she advocates never fails to obtain His divine benediction. Be faithful ever to thy Immaculate Protectress, and her aid will never be denied to thee when thou standest in need of it. At her command I caught thy inanimate form in the very moment when the wild waves were rushing with irresistible fury upon thee, and conveyed thee to this beautiful island, where thou mayest securely await



the dispensations of God's will concerning thee, assured that whilst thou art faithful to Him, thou wilt never be forgotten by the Mother of Mercy. Let thy escape this day be a pledge to thee that she can never be invoked in vain."

"O, truly never!" exclaimed Reginald, with fervor. "But do thou, O dearest friend, who so faithfully obeyest the commands of our glorious Queen, tell me who art thou to whose care I am so indebted?"

"We are not strangers to one another," replied the other, with a benignant smile; "on the contrary, we are old acquaintances, and our friendship cannot lightly be dissolved. Not now," continued he, adopting a more familiar tone, "not now, for the first time does your voice fall upon my ear. Since reason first dawned upon your infant mind, night and morning you have saluted me and asked me to protect you."

Reginald gazed earnestly and supplicatingly on the beautiful countenance of his mysterious friend.

"With the water of holy baptism still undried upon your brow," said the angel, for

such he was, "you were committed to my custody by the Most High God. Though invisible, I have been ever your inseparable companion, and I have seen with joy that you were a favorite child of God's glorious Mother."

"Yes, dearest Mother!" exclaimed Reginald, "next to God, is it not to thee I am indebted that now I live? And thou, my angelic guardian, for now I know thee, O tell me, teach me how I can best prove my gratitude to the Divine Majesty and to the sacred Virgin Mother for my wonderful deliverance."

"Be it your care to have the will of Almighty God before you in all you do and say, continue to place entire confidence in His goodness and the Blessed Mary's intercession. Whatever trials you may yet have to encounter, remember that Jesus is all-powerful in heaven and on earth, and that His Immaculate Mother is all-powerful with her God and Son."

Reginald looked the gratitude he could not speak, and for some moments both stood apparently fixed in silent contemplation of



the infinite goodness of God, and admiration of the glories of Mary.

Reginald was the first to speak. "Celestial guardian of one so little worth, my soul acknowledges the consoling truths thou hast spoken; but tell, O tell me, if I may dare to make the inquiry, was the Majesty of Almighty God so grievously offended by the impiety of the wretched Hubert, that his last agonizing cry, 'Mother of Mercy! help!' was breathed in vain? Would not, O, did not, the Mother of Mercy plead for him then before the throne of her Son?"

"The future," mildly answered the good angel, "will unfold to you what you wish now to learn from me. Wait with patience till it shall please God to clear up the mystery that enshrouds the fate of your friend. It is not necessary for you to know more of him now, and I must not exceed the commission entrusted to me. Most pleasing to me has been the duty which devolved upon me. And now, dear child of Mary, I shall soon again become invisible to your mortal eyes, listen then to what I say, and with the Mother of Mercy for your protectress, fear



not for the future. This small and uninhabited island produces an abundance of fruit and wholesome herbs, and you will therefore be in no want of means of subsistence during the time allotted for your stay upon it. There are no beasts of prey or noxious animals of any description, and you will be able, with little difficulty, to construct a shelter from the noontide sun and the winds of heaven. You will find many things washed hither from the wreck, which will be of service to you. Be not cast down at the prospect of remaining here. You can never be lonely if you bear in mind the reality of the Divine Presence and the watchful patronage of Mary. I, too, shall be near you, though you see me not."

While he yet spoke, the fair guardian angel grew more radiantly beautiful, and extended his shining wings which had hitherto been concealed by the folds of his garments.

Reginald dropped upon his knees, and stretching out his hands in supplication, exclaimed, "My father, my mother, who shall comfort them?"

"The Mother of Mercy, the comfortress



of the afflicted," said the blessed spirit, and gently bending his glorious head, he waived his bright azure plumes, and in a moment was lost to sight.

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## CHAPTER II.

"**M**OTHER of Mercy," added Eustace de Tracey, to his wife's prayer for their son, "Mother of Mercy, no one ever had recourse to thee in vain."

"Fear not, Gertrude," he continued, addressing his wife, "the gloomy clouds that darkened the air cannot obscure the radiance of Mary, the heavenly star of the ocean, and the light of her glory will illumine the waves and guide our Reginald to a place of safety."

"What, then, have we to dread," said Gertrude, "while our confidence in holy Mary's powerful advocacy remains unshaken? Let us leave him to the mercy of the Most High, and the maternal tenderness of Mary the Mother of grace and mercy. It is

useless for us to stand here gazing on the wide ocean. The evening is closing in and the wind blows coldly and keenly along the shore. Let us return into the house and offer up the Rosary in humble hope that our hearts may be soon gladdened by good tidings of our beloved Reginald."

Eustace readily complied with the pious suggestion, and the "Ave Marias" of the holy Rosary, on that eventful eve, were borne by angels to the starry throne, where, seated next to her Divine Son, Mary the Mother of Mercy offered to His Sacred Heart the fervent supplications of the anxious parents.

The next morning's dawn beheld the same fond parents kneeling in their little oratory, and there, before the sacred image of their crucified God, they offered up their morning devotions and renewed their petitions on behalf of their son.

Fervent perseverance in prayer brought with it increased confidence in the goodness of God and the intercession of His Holy Mother, and the parents of Reginald rose from their knees perfectly resigned to the



Divine Will, and evincing by the placid expression of their countenances the calm of holy hope and heavenly consolation, on which their souls reposed.

A few brief observations respecting the family of Reginald de Tracey, may here serve to throw some light on the circumstances under which he was first introduced to the reader.

Eustace and Gertrude de Tracey were both well descended, and could trace their lineage for some centuries, through ancestors whose names stood high upon the historic page of England's chivalry, and in later years through illustrious confessors of the faith, who had forfeited, not only their hereditary estates and honors, but liberty and even life itself, for their fidelity to the Church of God. Nothing now remained of the ancient possessions of the family but a small estate, situated on the Sussex coast, and an old manor house to which Eustace de Tracey had succeeded shortly after his marriage with Gertrude, who had for her dowry a few adjacent acres. Their income just sufficed, with prudent management, for the

maintenance of their little household, which consisted of Reginald, their only child, and two faithful old domestics, Andrew and Lilian, who had come down like heir-looms with the ancient manor house, to its present possessors.

Philip Stanley, their nearest neighbor, and occupier of an extensive farm, was, like de Tracey, descended from a family that had been despoiled of its possessions for adherence to the old faith, but had retained a small competence, which, transmitted to the present representative of the line, enabled him to maintain a respectable position in the world.

Reginald de Tracey and Hubert, Philip Stanley's son, were friends and companions from their childhood, and greatly attached to each other, notwithstanding the dissimilarity in their tempers and inclinations, apparent even at that early age, to the watchful observation of the parents of both. Reginald was high-spirited, but not proud, enterprising but prudent, patient, persevering, and steadfastly attached to the faith of his fathers. Young as he was, he stood



prepared, should the sword of persecution ever be again unsheathed, to seal his adherence to the Church of ages with his blood.

Whilst yet his lisping tongue could hardly articulate, his pious parents had taught him to utter with love the holy names of Jesus and Mary, and her chaste spouse St. Joseph; the hallowed recollections of infantine devotion became deeply impressed upon his memory, and "Mother of mercy, pray for me," was the constant aspiration, not only of his childhood, but of his maturer years.

Hubert Stanley, on the contrary, was daring, inconsiderate, passionate, and self-willed, although he was not altogether destitute of some brighter qualities. Carefully instructed in religion from his infancy, the sacred truths thus early inculcated, remained indelibly engraven upon his young heart. Heedless, however, and impatient of control, he contented himself with a merely passive profession of religion, and though he joined his parents in their daily devotions, he allowed himself no time for a single other holy aspiration during the day, except when his friend Reginald's oft-repeated "Mother

of Mercy," irresistably awakened some hallowed remembrance in his soul. There were even times when he would suffer Reginald's importunity to withdraw him from some favorite pastime, to join in reciting the holy Rosary in honor of the Divine Infant and His Immaculate Mother; for proud and impetuous as he was, he could see and respect in his friend, the virtues he took little care to cultivate in himself. Hubert Stanley, however, was not unforgiving or vindictive; easily provoked, he was as easily appeased, and at all times he was ready to extend the hand of charity to the poor and needy.

When Reginald was about twenty years of age, a ship-master, who chanced to be visiting his relatives in that part of the country, understanding from Eustace de Tracey that his son had frequently shown a desire to visit foreign countries, offered to take him on a voyage to South America. The captain was well known to Eustace, and, with his parent's consent, Reginald joyfully accepted the offer so kindly made, and lost no time in preparing for the voyage. As



soon as Hubert heard the news, he wrung from his reluctant father and disconsolate mother, a weeping consent that he should accompany Reginald, the captain consenting to receive him also on board the *Antelope*, for so was the vessel named which he commanded.

The necessary preparations for their departure were soon made, and, having taken an affectionate leave of their parents, Reginald and Hubert departed with the captain on his return to the port from whence the vessel was to sail.

The *Antelope* accomplished her outward voyage in safety, and was homeward bound, when the storm arose that proved so fatal to the unfortunate vessel and her gallant crew.



## CHAPTER III.

**R**EGINALD remained with his eyes fixed steadfastly on the bright sunny cloud that slowly closed over the last shining traces of the angel's departure, and when at length it faded away, he cast a mournful look around, and, for the first time, felt all the loneliness of his position.

“Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy,” he prayed, “to thee do I cry, poor banished child of Eve, to thee do I send up my sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn, then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards me, and, in this my exile, show thyself a Mother unto me, O most clement, most sweet Virgin.”

Whilst he prayed, he felt his confidence in Jesus and Mary sensibly increase, and, cheered by the consoling hope that broke sweetly upon his soul, he began to consider how he had best set about providing for his subsistence during the period allotted by



Divine Providence for his abode on the island. Silently and hopefully he walked along the shore, calling upon God, His holy Mother, and the bright angel who had succored him at his utmost need.

He had not proceeded far when he discovered a cask, which he knew contained biscuits, a valuable acquisition to him in his present necessity. It did not appear to have sustained any injury, and, after considerable exertion, he succeeded in rolling it to a sufficient distance from the water to prevent the possibility of its being swept away by the returning tide. Carefully noting the place where he left it, and making an act of thanksgiving to God and our Lady, he continued his search along the shore. He found the beach in some places strewed with various articles of which he stood in much need. Among these were large pieces of sail cloth and tarpaulin, which he felt would prove of great use to him in constructing a tent. There was also a chest containing seamen's clothing, together with a blanket or two, dripping from the ocean, it is true, but which he could soon dry in the sun, that



was beginning to get very powerful as the morning progressed. Gathering fresh courage, he proceeded on his way, and at length came upon a carpenter's chest, but what delighted him more than anything else was to perceive fluttering on the top of a small barrel, that was floating very near the shore, a tame dove, (the former pet of the Antelope's crew), plaintively cooing for assistance.

"Colombe! Colombe!" exclaimed Reginald, hastening to the water's edge, and extending his arms towards her. The dove knew his voice, and, tired as she was, she spread her weary wings, and making a strong effort gained the land. She was nearly exhausted, when, with a faint coo, she alighted on Reginald's outstretched arm, but his encouraging voice, and some pieces of biscuit soaked in a small stream of fresh water that was dropping from an adjacent rock, soon revived the pretty little flutterer; and Reginald proceeded on his way, not a little cheered by the presence of a friend and companion, so docile and faithful as Colombe. More solicitous for her safety than his own, he turned from the



shore, and, directing his steps more inland, he collected small straight stems of plants, not unlike cane, which he discovered in large quantities, and sitting down beneath the shade of a stately palm, with Colombe at his side, he managed, with a pocket knife, and some pieces of cord he had in his pocket, to construct a tolerably commodious cage for her, in which she could remain in security during the night, or shelter herself from the scorching heat of the noonday sun.

Having completed his task, and gathered some flowers, leaves, moss, and soft silky grass, to form a nest for his bird, he placed her in her new habitation, with which she was evidently well pleased.

Oppressed with the heat, and still suffering from what he had endured the day before, he shared with Colombe what remained of the biscuits he had brought with him, quenched his thirst with the milk of a cocoa-nut, that had been shaken by the recent storm from a tree close by, and then lay down at the foot of the palm, placing Colombe, in her cage at his head, and com-



mending himself to the care of God, our Lady, and his good guardian angel. He soon fell into a profound sleep, from which he did not awake for some hours, when he rose up with a light and joyful heart, completely recovered from the effects of the hardships he had so recently endured.

His first accents were those of praise and glory to the Most High, accompanied by an Ave to the Blessed Mother of God, with a prayer for the patronage of St. Joseph, and the assistance of his kind guardian angel, and then, after a few moments' reflection, he began to retrace his steps along the shore, carrying Colombe in her cage, in which, though not a gilded one, she seemed perfectly happy

The tide in the mean time had receded a considerable distance, and Reginald, to his no small satisfaction, discovered the small barrel upon which Colombe had taken refuge in her hour of peril, and which he knew contained wine, stuck fast in the sand, and near it a tolerably large case of preserved meats, so carefully secured that he felt satisfied they could not have sustained any



injury from the water. This, however, he soon put beyond doubt, for having with considerable difficulty extricated the barrel from the sand, and succeeded in getting it upon the beach, he broke in its head, and filled a large shell with the generous liquor, and having, with his pocket knife, opened the case of meats, he sat down, and, with Colombe familiarly perched on his wrist, made a very pleasant meal, not forgetting the wants of his little feathered companion.

With all his loneliness, Reginald experienced a degree of happiness and contentment which even those who dwelt in the palaces of royalty might have envied, so perfect was his resignation to the Divine Will, and his confidence in the protection of his beloved patroness. But, while his heart overflowed with gratitude for his own miraculous preservation, and the favors showered upon him by the infinite goodness of Almighty God, his memory often reverted to the fate of the brave mariners, so lately his friends and comrades, and many were the prayers he uttered for the eternal repose of their departed souls, and many were the

Aves he addressed to the sweet Mother of Mercy on their behalf.

And there was one whose mysterious fate caused him to endure the most painful suspense. That one was Hubert, the playmate of his childhood, the companion of his youth, until that last sad hour, when he had heard his despairing cries to that gracious Mother whom he had blasphemed. But she was the Mother of Mercy still, and Reginald was not without some hope that she had listened to the wretched Hubert's appeal. At length he arose with Colombe from their pebbly table, and without further delay began to erect his tent. He was pleased to find that the pieces of sail-cloth and tarpaulin he had spread upon the sand in the morning were now quite dry, and setting himself to work with a will, he succeeded in constructing a tent, rather awkward and ill-shaped, it must be confessed, but still sufficient to shelter himself and Colombe until he could at leisure erect a more comfortable and more commodious habitation.

The sun had set, and the full moon had



risen before he completed his task. He had selected the centre of an olive grove, about half a mile distant from the shore, for the site, and having succeeded in his undertaking to his entire satisfaction, he now sat down to rest and contemplate his handiwork upon which the moon was shining in full splendor. He sat for a time ruminating on his own strange adventures, but at length other and more impressive recollections crowded upon his imagination. He thought how on such a night as this the bright moonlight once beamed upon the green olives in a far-off land, and shed its silver radiance on a Mighty One, Whose Own Will had laid Him prostrate upon the cold green turf, while Blood Divine gushed from every Sacred Vein, and God-made Man, amidst His Agony of unparalled bitterness, offered Himself a willing Sacrifice to His Eternal Father.

Long and silently sat Reginald immersed in thoughts like these, and forgetful of earthly things, till startled by a gentle rustling among the leaves of a tree close by his side, he cast a look of inquiry around.



It was a robin redbreast, and while he gazed with some surprise on the little familiar creature, it stood fearlessly perched on the spray, without manifesting the slightest fear. The incident, so unexpected, recalled to his mind a legend, which, in his earlier childhood, he had loved to hear his mother repeat whilst he was seated on her knee, in his far distant English home. In the fulness of his heart he repeated it now.

“THE LEGEND OF THE ROBIN REDBREAST.

“Beautiful bird, O tell me why  
Thy red breast wears that crimson dye ?  
Beautiful bird, I ask thee yet,  
Why seems thy breast with blood drops wet ?  
Beautiful bird, I ask again,  
Why bears thy breast that red, red stain ?  
Sweet bird, has it been always so ?  
The gentle robin answered, ‘No !’ ”  
“O pilgrim. ’twas an awful hour,  
And sadness fill’d the olive bower,  
And sighs amidst the garden rose,  
That told of more than mortal woes :  
That night the footsteps of a God,  
Gethsemane’s green alleys trod !  
And He lay prostrate on the earth,  
Whose mighty word gave nature birth,  
And there were none to comfort Him,  
Whose Eyes Divine with tears were dim,  
A little fluttering bird alone,  
Was there to hear the Saviour’s moan,




And all it could, with fanning wings,  
It did to soothe the King of kings,  
And Glory's Lord that bird caress'd,  
And one rich Blood Drop stained its breast;  
Then angels came from heaven above,  
Sent by th' Eternal Father's love,  
And Him ador'd. But since that time  
In ev'ry age, in ev'ry clime,  
Upon their breast the Robins wear,  
The hallowed stain imprinted there."

Having concluded the legend, Reginald recited his Rosary, and that duty performed, and taking care not to leave Colombe behind, he retired for the night into his newly-erected habitation; whilst the pretty robin hopped home to his mossy nest, by no means disconcerted by the coming of his newly arrived neighbors, Reginald and Colombe.



## CHAPTER IV.

HE next morning was far advanced, when the young lord of the Green Island was awakened from a long and refreshing sleep, by the cooing of the dove, whose cage, for better security, he had hung up the preceding night just over his head. His first accents were those of praise and adoration to the Almighty Power who had graciously watched over his repose in that lonely island. His homage offered to the Divine Majesty, his next salutations were addressed to the dear Mother of Mercy, and, not forgetting to recommend himself to St. Joseph and his guardian angel, of whose unseen presence he felt assured, the young solitary set about preparing breakfast for himself and Colombe. He laid biscuits, dried meats, and fruit upon the grass outside his tent, and, as he looked around on the beautiful scenery which everywhere presented itself to his observation, and down upon the flower-spangled dewy turf which formed his breakfast table, and thought of



the blessings which a good God was pouring upon him even in that remote corner of the earth, his heart swelled with gratitude and tender love.

Breakfast prepared, his next care was to release his feathered friend from her cage. She was perfectly tame, and he entertained no fear that she would attempt to escape from his protection, and having with the Sign of the Holy Cross asked the Divine blessing on his food, he sat down upon the grass. The affectionate dove fluttered around him, till at length she fixed herself upon his arm, and the two friends were taking their breakfast in perfect harmony, when the social party was most agreeably augmented by the presence of another and, though unexpected, a very welcome guest. It was the pretty robin of the evening before. The little fellow evidently wished to cultivate acquaintance, for he at once commenced picking up the crumbs of biscuit that were scattered about, and even ventured to feed from Reginald's hand without showing any signs of fear. Having satisfied his hunger, after hopping about for some time,



he flew to his perch on an adjacent tree, where he commenced singing a sweet and plaintive solo, till attracted by his voice, several others of his tribe joined in, and in soft sweet harmony with melodious voices, sang matins to the God by whom all things were made.

In the meantime, having finished their breakfast, well pleased with the viands their flowery table had afforded, and in perfect good humor with each other, Reginald, with Colombe perched on his shoulder, made an act of thanksgiving, to which she sweetly cooed response, and then employed himself in securing his stock of provisions, and the several articles he had collected the preceding day, in a grotto at the foot of a green hillock that raised its flowery summit near his newly erected habitation. While thus occupied, he was most unexpectedly gratified on opening a small chest, to find that it contained several books of devotion and religious instruction, two or three small crucifixes, and a rosary, besides pens, ink and paper. To him the acquisition would at any time have been welcome, but placed as he was, he looked on it as a treasure indeed.



Having arranged his casks and packages in the grotto, he returned to his tent for shelter from the midday sun, where his lonely meditations were only interrupted by the soft voice of Colombe, sweetly and plaintively cooing while hopping around him. She was seemingly conscious that she was his only companion, and never showed the slightest inclination to fly to the green woods and shady bowers, where orange trees, white with blossom, and flowering shrubs of many colors, invited her to dwell amidst their fragrance. The gentle dove was too faithful to forsake her only friend; and neither the gay plumage, red, blue, green and yellow, of the birds of the island, nor the harmony of their melodious notes, could entice her to any distance from him. Long and sadly he dwelt on the events of the two preceding days, and again the gloomy retrospection of Hubert's uncertain fate recurred to his mind, and a sadness to which he could not give expression came over his soul.

He sat thus lost in bitter remembrances of the past, and painful anxiety for the future,

till the benignant voice of his angelical guardian, softly whispering hope and consolation, spoke interiorly to his depressed spirit, gently admonishing him to beware of ungratefully suffering his confidence in the Divine Mercy to falter after so many proofs of the unceasing goodness of God, and the maternal love of the Queen of Heaven. Reginald acknowledged the justice of the admonition gently breathed by the viewless and blessed spirit, and with reanimated hope exclaimed :

“Mother of mercy ! I am indeed ungrateful to thee, from whom I have received so many proofs of love, but ask thy Blessed Son, and He will pardon my want of faith ; and do thou, O dearest Lady, pardon my ingratitude, and never again let my reliance on the goodness of God, and my dependance on thy gracious patronage, be overcast by one shadow of doubt.”

His prayer was not breathed in vain. A sweet consoling calm took possession of his soul, and with a light heart and cheerful countenance he exclaimed :

“Mother of God ! thou wilt be watchful



over my solitude. I repine not at my abode in this island, for I am surrounded by many proofs of the divine bounty and of thy care. But I grieve that there is here no church dedicated to the Most High, no holy priest to celebrate the Divine Mysteries or administer the sacraments in which alone I could find strength and patience to await the future dispensations of the Divine Will. Thy intercession, however, is all prevailing before the Throne of Eternal Majesty, and thy prayers can obtain that this fair island may yet be inhabited by fervent adorers of the Triune God, and that hearts faithfully devoted to thee, O sacred Virgin, may unite their acts of praise and thanksgiving to the Almighty with the adoration of the anointed priest, whilst the smoke of sweet incense ascends before altars consecrated to His worship, and requiem and solemn 'dirige' is sung, for the departed souls of the mariners who perished near this shore."

Such was the act of confidence in our Lady, fervently uttered by her devoted client, who did not remain long inactive. Before the expiration of many days he had with great



labor and perseverance constructed a pretty little chapel with green boughs tastefully intertwined, and young trees and flowering shrubs closely planted together, and roofed with a piece of sailcloth, thickly covered with long palm leaves, skilfully plaited and carefully arranged. The sylvan edifice gracefully raised its verdant spire, crowned with a wooden cross wreathed with flowers, beneath the shade of a lofty palm tree, amidst a circle of young olive plants, and surrounded on the outside with a pavement formed of pieces of crystal and spars of various colors, which he found in abundance in a cavern that he had discovered among the rocks that in many places overhung the shore.

His next care was to provide his church with an altar. This he happily effected to his great satisfaction, and tastefully adorned it with rare and beautiful shells of brilliant color, which he had picked up on the shore. He formed a carpet for his little sanctuary by cutting green mossy turf, spangled with flowers, which he bordered with small yellow and violet shells and finished off with a fringe of Indian moss.



It took him some weeks to do all this, with no other earthly assistant than poor Colombe, who was the faithful companion of his labors, and who, hopping and fluttering about him, from place to place, testified to the utmost of her power how willingly she would help him if she could.

There was more work to be done, however. The altar wanted a crucifix and an image of the dear Mother of Mercy; neither was St. Joseph to be forgotten, nor his own kind guardian angel. His diligence and untiring perseverance overcame all difficulties. Among the articles washed ashore from the wreck was a box, the property of one of the passengers, who was by profession a sculptor, and Reginald found it contained implements suitable for his purpose, neither was the practice of the sculptor's art altogether new to him. One of his favorite pastimes, in the bright hours of his happy boyhood, was to exercise his skill in carving little images of our Blessed Saviour and His Holy Mother, and of such saints as his early devotion most inclined him to venerate.

He set to work accordingly, and made a



handsome cross of wood, sufficiently large for his purpose. Then, with one of the small crucifixes already mentioned for a model, he succeeded in carving an image of our dear Redeemer so beautifully proportioned that it might have been attributed to the talents of a much more experienced sculptor. He was not less successful with the images of the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph, and his dear Guardian Angel, whose assistance he often invoked during the progress of his work, on many occasions feeling unmistakeably convinced that his petitions were not unanswered.

It took him a considerable time, but patient and indefatigable, with Colombe in the kindest tones of her soft sweet voice cooing encouragement, he happily and thankfully accomplished the task.

There were now other things that necessarily claimed his attention. The weather was becoming cold, and the island beginning to wear a wintry aspect. His habitation required considerable improvement to adapt it to the change of season. He must also collect a store of fuel for the winter, and



attend to the preservation of what still remained of the stock of provisions he had saved from the wreck.

There were some small goats upon the island, and though they were very wild he had succeeded in catching three little kids. These were now becoming quite tame, playful, and familiar, and would, he expected, soon supply him with milk. The river was well stocked with fish, and he had provided himself with a net of his own contrivance; and having discovered in some parts of the island rice and Indian corn growing, he entertained no apprehensions that either himself or Colombe would be in danger of suffering from scarcity of provisions.

He had not observed any large birds upon the island, and he never once harbored an idea hostile to the safety of the beautiful choristers to whose daily matins and vespers he was accustomed to listen with so much delight.

There were some small parrots in the woods, but they were very few in number, and did not for a considerable time come near his abode.



But to return to the little church. Having exhausted his utmost means in embellishing and decorating it, he prostrated himself in grateful humility and thankfulness before the crucifix, and offered his labors to the honor and glory of the most Holy Trinity, and then reciting the Holy Rosary for the first time in his church, he offered it up to our Lady, dedicating his little temple to her under his favorite title of "The Mother of Mercy."

And then, his eyes beaming with hope and confidence in the Most High, and reliance on the maternal patronage of the Mother of God, he exclaimed aloud:

"Mother of Mercy! thou wilt offer my work, my hopes, and my intentions to the Eternal Majesty of Heaven, and thy prayer will not ascend in vain before the Throne of God. The great High Priest will send hither a priest to offer the Holy Sacrifice, the fragrant clouds of incense shall ascend before His altar, and faithful adorers shall sing, 'Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Host, heaven and earth are full of thy glory! Hosanna, Blessed is He who cometh in the Name of the Lord! Hosanna in the Highest!'"



## CHAPTER V.

**D**AYS, weeks and months passed tediously away, and brought Eustace and Gertrude de Tracey no news of their son. The Antelope's arrival home was long overdue, and fears were entertained for her safety. A ship that had sailed at the same time from Lima, but having occasion to stop for a few days at the Chincha Islands, had parted company with the Antelope on the third day of her homeward voyage, had reached England in safety; and her captain, when he was made acquainted with the fact of the Antelope's non-arrival, expressed his apprehension that she had foundered during a terrible storm that broke out the day after he separated from her.

Philip Stanley and his wife had almost ceased to hope that their eyes would ever again rest on their beloved Hubert. Eustace and Gertrude, on the contrary, while sorrowing for their absent son, preserved unshaken confidence in the mercy of God, and the intercession of the holy Virgin.

“Remember, O most holy Virgin,” they would say, “that it hath not been heard that ever any one had recourse to thee, implored thy help, or sought thy mediation, without obtaining relief. Inspired with this confidence unto thee do we fly, O Virgin of Virgins, our Mother, before thee do we wait, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Incarnate Word, despise not our petitions on behalf of our dear Reginald. In thy mercy hear us who have recourse to thee, and bring back, if it be the will of God, bring back our child in safety to our arms.”

The appeal did not ascend in vain. One bright and beautiful autumnal evening, while they were taking their accustomed walk by the sea side, they were suddenly startled by the appearance of a young man, who was evidently advancing to meet them.

For an instant their hearts throbbed with unutterable joy; “Was it, could it be their son?” A moment convinced them of their mistake.

“It is not our Reginald!” exclaimed Eustace. “But it may be one who brings us news of him.” They hastened to meet the



stranger. He was young and handsome, with long fair hair flowing over his shoulders; his countenance wore a gracious and an exalted expression, and benevolence beamed sweetly and kindly in the mild lustre of his large bright blue eyes.

"God and our Lady be praised!" exclaimed Eustace, anticipating. "Thou bringest intelligence of our Reginald?"

"I can read it in your happy countenance," added Gertrude. "Our dear Mother of Mercy was not deaf to our petitions."

"Pious and happy parents," answered the young stranger, in a tone of superhuman sweetness, "the Queen of Heaven is indebted to you, and to your son, a true and faithful Mother of Mercy, and I am now here in obedience to her commands."

The overjoyed parents fixed their eyes inquiringly on the radiant messenger, for his form and aspect appeared too brightly beautiful to be of earthly mould.

"Give thanks to Almighty God," said he, "and to His Virgin Mother, for the mercy which has been shown to your son."

"Blessed be God," said Eustace and Ger-

trude, together, "blessed be His Holy Name, and blessed be Mary, the Immaculate Virgin Mother."

And then they waited in silence to hear what the evidently celestial messenger of Mary had to communicate.

"Your son," he said, "has been miraculously preserved, but his abode is for the present in a far-off land, where he is safe and happy, living in the presence of God and under the continual protection of the Blessed Virgin. He is not forgetful of you, but he submits with patience and resignation to the Divine Will. You shall live to see him again and to bless him, but it will be years before that time arrives: submit yourselves, then, and leave the future to Heaven."

For a moment he was silent. They bowed their heads submissively, and then the radiant messenger resumed.

"My mission is only to remove your fears for your son's safety. But there is another, of whom in pity to his parents I may speak. It is true they commended their son to the care of the Mother of God, but their confidence in her goodness was weak and waver-



ing, and their son, by his neglect and indifference, rendered himself unworthy of her protection. She ceased not, however, to be the Mother of Mercy, and when all but too late, his agonizing cry, 'Mother of Mercy, help! help!' was borne by his weeping guardian angel to her celestial throne, and Hubert Stanley still lives."

Eustace would have spoken, but the messenger of Mary proceeded.

"Farewell, servants of the Mother of God; my mission is now fulfilled," and, extending his dazzling plumes, till then unobserved, winged his upward way to the bright realms of eternal blessedness.

Eustace and Gertrude watched the flight of the angelical messenger, until he was no longer visible in the clear blue sky, and then returned to their home, their hearts overflowing with joy, gratitude and thanksgiving.

"Alas, poor Hubert!" said Gertrude as they entered the house. "It pained my heart to hear of his ingratitude to the Holy Virgin, but I felt consoled when I was told that even for him there was mercy. We

may hear good news of him yet. But in what way do you think, Eustace, we should acquaint the Stanleys with the information we have received concerning him?"

"I was just considering," said he, "and I am of opinion that the most prudent course for us to pursue, will be to inform them that we have been credibly assured by one who passed this way, that Hubert and Reginald are still alive."

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## CHAPTER VI.

**T**WELVE months passed away, and Reginald was still the only human inhabitant of the Green Island. But he was well and happy. His faithful Colombe was daily becoming a more familiar, and it might be said, a more intelligent companion; tractable and docile, in all his occupations, and in all his wanderings, the faithful dove was ever at his side. The pretty robins, too, had established quite a colony of their own, among the shrubs and trees that surrounded his abode, and were his constant and uncere-



monious guests, morning and evening, gratefully repaying him with the dulcet harmony of their sweet songs, for the entertainment they received.

His three little goats had grown apace. They were very tame and gave an abundant supply of milk. He had, besides these, a tortoise he found nearly half dead upon a rock. It was so old it was scarcely able to hobble about, but he took it home, treated it kindly, and the poor thing was evidently sensible of the attention paid to its wants and infirmities.

It cannot, therefore, be said that Reginald was very dull and lonely, and as for provisions, he had fruits in abundance, and could have a dish of fish on his flowery table whenever he thought proper. He had, besides, plenty of nutritious herbs and plants for every season in the year, to say nothing of the bread-fruit tree, of which there were several upon the island. With respect to his daily occupations, he maintained the utmost regularity, spending a considerable portion of the morning and evening in prayer and meditation, daily repeating aloud the

Holy Rosary ; and he was not a little surprised as well as pleased, after some months had gone by, to hear not unfrequent repetitions of the words, "Hail Mary," uttered very distinctly by some small parrots that had built their nest in the trees that surrounded his little church.

The young solitary, however, could not forget his fond parents, though consoled by the assurances of the angel, he did not repine. He sighed, too, when he thought on Hubert. But he had another and greater cause for sorrow. He had added to the altar a very pretty little tabernacle, which he had constructed with great care and ingenuity, having collected for the purpose several small blocks of variegated and shining stone, many of them exhibiting a surface brilliant as polished marble, with which, and some pieces of rock crystal, he completed his undertaking. As he made the best possible use of every article the waves had washed upon the shore, he was able to furnish his church with a lamp, having found in the carpenter's chest a small jar of oil. The addition of a lamp was absolutely ne-



cessary for the dignity of the church, but he sighed when he remembered that the lamp would burn before an empty tabernacle. There was the altar, but where was the priest and the Sacrifice? There was the tabernacle, but where was He who should be its Heavenly Indweller? He thought of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, and a beam of hope from heaven shed a bright light upon his soul.

“Mother of God!” exclaimed he, “thy maternal intercession with our dear Lord will obtain all that is wanting. Take this little structure under thy powerful patronage, which in thy honor I have called the chapel of the Mother of Mercy.” At that moment an idea flashed upon his imagination, new and till then unthought of, but whether it arose from a secret inspiration, or from the recollections of his early childhood, he could not tell.

“’Tis strange,” he said, “that an imagination so strange should thus suddenly burst upon my soul. And yet it is not impossible that Father Ignatius de Tracey may still be living, though so many years have elapsed since any news of him reached my father’s

ears. The conjecture may prove the harbinger of a joyful reality, and the Mother of Mercy may conduct him to this very island, and it may be mine to congratulate my venerable uncle upon this unfrequented shore. Happy shall I be, if it pleases heaven to permit my return to my father's house, to rejoice his heart by the glad tidings that his long unheard of brother is still living, and the first priest who offered up the Holy Sacrifice on the far away island of which I was so long the only human inhabitant."

Father Ignatius de Tracey was the younger brother of Eustace, and had from a very early age manifested a strong inclination for a religious life, which he finally determined to embrace. Bidding farewell to his friends, he took ship for Spain, where he was admitted into the Society of Jesus. In Spain he remained some years, and when at length he was professed, he was sent with some others to South America, where the society had already, by apostolic labors, converted some of the wildest and most savage tribes to the Christian faith.

For some years after his departure, Eus-



storm soon after beginning to abate, he slowly returned home.

To his great satisfaction, Reginald's abode had suffered but little injury from the storm, and cold and weary he lay down on his mossy couch, and closing his eyes with his favorite aspiration, "Mother of Mercy, help!" he slept tranquilly till morning.

The storm had passed away. The sky was cloudless and serene, the ocean calm and unruffled, when Reginald, having offered up his morning prayers, and shared his repast with the innocent companions of his solitude, again directed his steps to the shore. He could not forget the cry which he had heard, or thought he heard, the preceding night. He proceeded for a considerable distance along the shore, but no object appeared in sight, neither did he hear any repetition of the cry, and he was turning homeward, when his observation was attracted by a quantity of sea weed and shells that had been swept close to the shore by the force of the tide during the night. While regarding it for a moment he imagined that it was agitated by the

movements of some living creature entangled in it. He approached the tangly heap, and beheld to his unutterable surprise, half buried in sand and sea weed, an Indian boy, apparently about nine or ten years old, shivering with cold, and nearly exhausted by the hardships he had endured. Reginald quickly extricated him from his entanglement, and endeavored by his kindness and care to acquire his confidence, and remove any fears he might have for his safety.

The little Indian was almost chilled with cold, but his looks shewed gratitude and satisfaction, and exhibited no signs of fear. He eagerly snatched a bunch of grapes offered by Reginald, who had provided himself with them when setting out in the morning upon his charitable search. The poor child ate or rather devoured the grapes with greediness, for he was burning with thirst, and his lips were so parched and dry that he could only give utterance to inarticulate and scarcely audible sounds ; but the refreshment so promptly administered was not without its effect, and Reginald beheld



with pleasure the happy results produced by the invigorating juice on the little sufferer, who endeavored by words and signs to express his gratitude to his benefactor. Reginald had picked up some Spanish in Lima, and he was not a little pleased to find that the Indian boy could speak that language.

Kneeling on the beach, he poured forth the warm effusions of his heart, in thanksgiving to the Divine Majesty, for having chosen him to be the preserver of the helpless little stranger, and not of his life alone but most probably also of his immortal soul, for he felt almost assured that the child was a pagan.

“Mother of Mercy!” he exclaimed, his eyes beaming with hope and confidence, “Mother of Mercy, adopt this child for thy own. May his life, so miraculously preserved, be devoted to Jesus, to thee, and thy chaste spouse. Assist me, then, dear Lady, that I may be able to teach the lips of this little one to pronounce the sweet names of Jesus and Mary, and of thy holy spouse, whose name he shall bear, for I will

call him Joseph. God will be his Father, and thou, O holy Mary, wilt be his mother!"

Having ended his prayer, he turned to the little Indian, who was attentively observing him, but showed no surprise at his devotion. A supposition that the boy was the offspring of Christian parents for the first time flashed upon Reginald's imagination and he repeated a Hail Mary in Spanish, but the boy showed no signs of devotional recollection, although Reginald imagined he could detect from his countenance that the accents of the Hail Mary were not altogether unfamiliar to his ear.

"Do you remember to have heard such words before now?" he kindly asked.

"Yes, yes, I have heard some such pretty talk," said the boy, with a look of childish simplicity, while he tried to shake the wet out of the beautiful skin that was girt around him with a belt profusely ornamented with beads of every color.

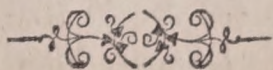
It may be remarked here, that all conversations between Reginald and the Indian child were carried on in Spanish, until the boy acquired a sufficient knowledge of the




English tongue to be able to converse with his benefactor in that language.

“Poor child!” exclaimed Reginald, “you are cold and wet, I will carry you to my dwelling, where I can dry you, and where you may rest in perfect security. When you have recovered from the effects of your long exposure, we will talk over what you have gone through.”

Saying this, he took the little sufferer up in his arms, and returned to his tent, where he deposited his living burden on his own bed of dried leaves and moss, to the no small discomfiture of Colombe, who was not perfectly well pleased with the unexpected introduction of the young stranger. The sweetness of her nature, however, prevailing over her dissatisfaction, she gently cooed a friendly welcome to cheer the poor shivering boy; but the goats, less domesticated, were so much alarmed that it gave Reginald some trouble to quieten them.



## CHAPTER VII.

HILE the Indian boy slept, Reginald, who tenderly watched his newly-acquired charge, for the first time narrowly observed his features, of which, when he first found him upon the shore, he had taken but little notice. Now, however, when looking at him quietly sleeping on the mossy bed, he could not help admiring the boy. His complexion was olive, and his long black hair waved in still wet and oozy tresses over his neck and shoulders, while his aspect wore a wild graceful dignity that contributed in no small degree to strengthen the favorable impression with which Reginald was already disposed to regard him.

The robe of skins which he wore was of the most costly description, his neck and arms were profusely adorned with shells, beads, and other ornaments, some of them apparently of no small value, and Reginald concluded that he was the son of some powerful chief. It was late in the evening when he awoke, and Reginald in the mean-



time had dried his garments in the sun, and added to them some few articles of European clothing for the sake of warmth.

Little Joseph, for so his preserver determined he should be called, having dressed, sat down upon the grass with Reginald, while Colombe and the rest of the little family, more tractable than in the morning, assembled around them to partake of the banquet Reginald had prepared, and arranged to the best advantage, to please alike the eyes and the palate of his guests.

Reginald did not forget to ask the Divine benediction on their food, and, during the meal, endeavored by every little kindness his benevolent heart could suggest, to gain the confidence of his little companion, and he was pleased to find that his efforts were not without success. The boy was evidently sad, and Reginald more than once detected tears trickling down his olive cheeks.

Having finished their dinner, he took the child's unresisting hands in his, and placing them together in an attitude of prayer, held them up, telling him to repeat after him an act of thanksgiving to God for His goodness

in so abundantly supplying their wants, and the little fellow obeyed with the greatest docility, apparently anxious not only to perform but to understand a duty which his deliverer seemed to consider so indispensable.

Recollecting the child's reply when he first repeated the "Hail Mary," Reginald said it again in a clear and distinct voice, while the boy listened with evidently painful attention.

"You told me," said Reginald, "that you had heard some such pretty talk, as you called the prayer I have just now repeated. Tell me, from whose lips did you first hear it?"

"Can't tell much—strangers with white faces, came and dwelt for a time beneath the shade of our palm trees, and they talked that way."

"Do you know no more? Where did they come from?"

"From far off—over the great sea."

"What were they called?"

"Black—Robe! Black Robe!" exclaimed the little fellow, in a tone of exultation,



pleased that his memory enabled him so readily to answer the inquiries, but the next moment his eyes filled with tears, and a shade of intense sadness passed over his expressive countenance.

A silence of some moments followed, which Reginald did not attempt to interrupt till the young Indian, his black, bright eyes sparkling through the tears that trembled on their long lashes, suddenly asked :

“Who is your God? Is he the God of the Black Robes?”

“He is,” emphatically replied Reginald, aware that by that name the Fathers of the Society of Jesus were known among the American Indians.

“I am glad of that,” said the boy, “for more than once, when I could not reach some fruit, they gathered it for me from the high branches.”

“They have, then, a claim upon your gratitude,” observed his friend. “But what else did they do?”

“They poured water upon people’s heads to make them good, and they did finer things than that, and put on garments shin-

ing with gold, and all over flowers, and they had lights and a bright cup, and read out of a great book, and there was smoke that had such a sweet smell, and they were kind and good to every one, and not one of those upon whose heads they poured the water, would pray to the old wooden gods any more, and they were thrown away and broken, and no one cared what became of them."

"Did you pity the old wooden gods, Joseph?"

"Not I, indeed. What good were they? when they were knocked about, and covered with dirt, and trodden underfoot, and could not help themselves; and I heard a Black Robe tell, how his God is the only true God, and is greater than the bright shining moon, and the sun, and the stars, for He made them and the whole world, and can do all things He pleases, He is so great and so good."

"You have listened very attentively to the good Black Robes," said Reginald.

"Sometimes," was the brief reply.

"Did they teach you to worship their God?"



"They did tell me some very wonderful things, and said they would put water on my head when I knew more."

Again the little Indian looked very sorrowful.

"Did they put the water on your head?"

"No," he answered, mournfully, looking piteously in Reginald's face, and bursting into tears.

"What grieves you, my child? Are you sure they did not put the water on your head?"

"Very sure they did not," sobbed the boy. "My father does not like the Black Robes. He is the chief of a very fierce tribe whom they tried to make good men, and persuaded them to bow down at a great good name they called Jesus, and they said He was God, and many of the people believed all they said, and promised to love Jesus and Mary, and do all they said, and my father was afraid of so many of the people. But he would not let them wet my head with water, and he carried me away into the woods. But my mother was not like him, and she was so good, and—"



Sobs choked the little fellow's utterance, and for some moments he wept bitterly.

Reginald endeavored to comfort him.

"Why do you weep my boy," said he.

"For my mother. She had a slave who adored the God of the Black Robes, and believed in their faith. She told my mother all she knew, and my mother went with her to a Black Robe—and he poured water on her head—and called her Mary, and said the Mother of his God was called Mary, and was greater than all the queens who lived in this world, and my mother was so happy, and said she would have me be like herself, and would take me to a Black Robe. But my father heard about the water on her head, and he struck her with his hatchet, and then hurried away into the woods; she lived but a very little while after she fell down upon the cold earth. But she said to me, 'Be a Christian, my child, and believe in Jesus and His Blessed Mother.' She could say no more, and I cried over her when she was dead. And then my father came again and would have killed the kind slave, poor Agnes, who wept with me, but



her brother and others of her people, who were warriors, and had come that very day to free Agnes, pointed their arrows at him, and made him run away again, and Agnes and her brother, with their people, took me with them to their canoes, and Agnes said we were going to live on another island with her people, where there were Black Robes who would tell me of the good Jesus and His Blessed Mother and—oh, I cannot think now. But I will remember it again. Yes, it was of some great good man whose name is just like what you call me.”

“I dare say it was the same that she meant. Was it not St. Joseph.”

“O yes! I think of it now. But all at once the wind began to blow, and it grew louder and louder, and made a terrible noise, and the sky was full of fire; and I said, ‘The God of the Black Robes was angry because my father had killed my mother.’ And then Agnes said we ought to have taken my dear mother’s body along with us, and she wept more and more; and the storm forced our canoe from the others, and Agnes’



brother said he thought the waves would drive us back again, and Agnes held me fast in her arms, and the canoe was tossed up and down. She tried to hold me still, but a great wave came and nearly overturned the canoe, and I fell out of her arms into the water, and she cried out very loud and her friends tried to reach me, but the canoe was carried away and the sea tossed me about, and then left me when I could not cry any more."

The little Indian could proceed no further, though, indeed, his story was ended, and again he wept bitterly.

Reginald again tried to console the little mourner, reminding him that God was so good and so powerful, and that it was very possible He had saved Agnes and the others who were with her, bidding him recollect how God in His great mercy caused the wild waves to cast him unhurt upon the beach, where He did not leave him to perish, but sent him help when he thought no human aid was near him.

Reginald's words had a visible effect on the young Indian, but the very recent fate



of his martyred mother, was mournfully impressed on his young heart, and suddenly breaking silence, he exclaimed,

“All that you say is well; Agnes may live, and the canoe float upon the wide sea: but my mother was killed, and I shall see her no more.”

“Say not so, my child: she is gone to another and a happier and a brighter world than this, where you will see and be happy with her again, if you are mindful of her last request.”

The Indian boy's dark eyes sparkled with animation and delight.

“Can God indeed do all this?” he eagerly asked.

“He can do all things; nothing is hard, nothing is impossible to Him, and He is ever ready to help those who love Him.”

“And the beautiful bright Queen?” cried the child.

“She will be your mother, and God will love you if you are always her good and obedient child.”

“Will she come to me here?”

“She will watch over you while you live

in this world, and you can speak to her at all times, and she will ask all things for you that are for your good, from her Divine Son."

"And her Son?" the child interposed.

"Is God," emphatically replied his youthful instructor. "Do you not remember that the good Black Robes said the Blessed Virgin Mary was indeed the Mother of God?"

"I remember very well, and I love her because she is the Mother of the great good only true God," responded the child, fixing his bright eyes on Reginald.

"I will do my best," said Reginald, "to help you to be a Christian and a good Catholic, for by that name the Church of our Lord and Saviour Jesus is distinguished; but you are not yet sufficiently recovered to listen to such instructions as I am able to give you. Keep in mind what I have said, and to-morrow we will talk more on the subject; and now, if you like, we will take a walk upon the beach and look at the bright blue ocean."



## CHAPTER VIII.

**T**HE next morning came. Their matin devotions were duly performed. The Indian boy, with his benefactor and Colombe, and the rest of the household, breakfasted together, and then Reginald, with Colombe on his arm, taking the child's hand, proceeded with him along the shore, mentally praying the Mother of Mercy to assist him in his efforts to instruct the little one.

"Do you remember where we left off yesterday?" inquired Reginald.

"Yes, yes," quickly replied the boy; "you told me the bright Queen would be my Mother, and you say she is the Mother of God, Who is so mighty, and so great, and so powerful. I am but a poor little Indian boy, and my mother was killed before my eyes. I can't think what all this means, but I believe it all, for the Black Robe talked just like you."

Reginald could not refrain from tears.

"Mother of Mercy!" he exclaimed, looking up to heaven, "assist my weak endeavors

to accomplish the great work it has pleased God to give me to do, and take this little one, O Blessed Mother, under your special protection."

"Are you speaking to the great Queen?" inquired the boy.

"Yes, my child, I prayed to her to help me to teach you to be a Christian, and begged she would take you under her protection."

"Did she say she would? I did not hear her speak."

"She speaks to my soul, to my heart, and to my faith in the Divine Goodness, and in the power of her intercession with her Adorable Son, Who never rejects her prayers; and this most amiable Mother is ever ready to hear us, although she does not often speak to us as we do to each other."

"I wish I could see her since she is so good, and so fair, and so bright. Agnes said she heard a Black Robe tell, that she was clothed with the sun, and had the moon under her feet; and I heard a Black Robe myself, tell how she is seated on a throne of glory by the Side of her Son."



"I think you know a good deal already," said Reginald. "What you have heard of the bright Queen of Heaven is perfectly true, and with the grace of God and her assistance, I will do my best to teach you what I know, for I long to see you become a Christian."

"Then pour plenty of water on my head at once, and make me one!" exclaimed the little fellow, clapping his hands apparently in the belief that nothing more was necessary to secure the attainment of his desire. The next moment, however, a cloud gathered on his brow, and looking sorrowfully in Reginald's face, he repeated in a desponding tone:

"But you are not a Black Robe?"

Reginald sighed, and looking up to heaven, called fervently and lovingly on his dear heavenly Mother.

"Blessed Mother, whence is the imagination that bursts upon my brain? The thought has come upon my soul once before."

He did not say more, but the aspiration reached the immaculate heart of her to whom



it was addressed, while his guardian angel sweetly repeated: "Mother of Mercy, be propitious to his hope!"

The Indian boy in the meantime was impatiently waiting for his reply.

"You say well, my child, the Lord's anointed are those to whom it properly belongs to pour water on your head, using certain words and ceremonies at the same time, that is, to administer the sacrament of Holy Baptism; but in case of necessity, even one unworthy as I am could perform that duty. You must, however, know and understand more before you can have your desire fulfilled; then God, if it please Him, will in His own good time, send a Black Robe hither to bless your expectation."

The boy looked somewhat incredulous.

"The Black Robes," he said, "very often put water on little Indian children, who can neither talk nor walk, and do not know what they are doing, and only cry."

"If you were a little infant," said Reginald, "the case would be very different. The baby might die before it was old enough to be taught, and the good Black Robes would



Eyes are always upon us, and His Ears open to our prayers. He is always with us, wherever we are and wherever we go."

"Always with us!" cried the little Indian, looking wistfully around him on every side.

"Yes, my boy, He is here, He is everywhere."

"Show Him to me, then!" exclaimed the child. "I long to see Him."

"We cannot see him now, my dear child," said Reginald; "He is too bright to be seen by our weak mortal eyes; but if we love Him and serve Him faithfully in this world, we shall see Him one day in all His glory, and majesty, and light, in His own Kingdom, and be happy with Him for ever and ever."

"Shall we have long to wait?"

"That depends upon His will. To some He gives many years, to others but few; but whatever He does is right, and we must submit to His Allwise Providence."

"I must try to please him," said the little Indian. "But you will have to talk very much to me. Agnes had very long talks with my mother." The name renewed all

his sorrow, and his tears flowed afresh, but after a short silence, he said, "You say my mother is with God, but is she not dead? How then can that be?"

"Her body is dead but her soul is a spirit, and is immortal, and in that it is like unto God. It can never die, but shall live forever with God."

"That's just like what I heard a Black Robe say one day, when one of our people died, upon whom he put the water, and he said strange words about prayer for the soul that was gone away somewhere; now, I want to know what did all that mean?"

"Your mother's soul went to heaven, to God and His holy Mother, as soon as it departed from her body, because she expired with her baptismal purity unstained; but many persons when they die are indebted to God's Justice, and their souls cannot go to heaven immediately, as your mother's did, and the good Black Robe asked the Christians to pray that God would speedily take them to Himself, from the place of purgation in which they were detained, but you will understand this better as we proceed."



"I long to know all, I want to hear everything. But if, as you say, our souls are like to God, then they must be very bright indeed," observed the young Indian.

"Our souls will be bright and beautiful if we love God and do His Will while we live in this world; but if we are bad and wicked in this life, our souls will be very frightful, and He will not suffer us to enter His Kingdom."

"Then you must tell me how to be good, till the wise Black Robe comes. You will have to talk all day long. I want to know everything, and I want to be very good; will that be very hard?"

"I hope not. If you desire to please God, He will help you; but you must love Him with all your heart, and above all things; do you think you will find it hard to do that?"

"O, no! I am sure I shall love Him. And then there is the bright Lady, His Dear Mother, I must love her too."

"If you love God, you must love His Blessed Mother. It is impossible to love the Son without loving the Mother. The more

you honor her, the more you will please Him, and she will pray to Him for you, and He will grant her all she asks. We have had a long conversation, and now we will drop the subject for a while, and turn our steps homeward."

The return of the two friends was welcomed as usual, Colombe keeping her place upon Reginald's shoulder, the robins and the green birds fluttered around them, while the little goats capered around Joseph, and the old tortoise crept, as well as she could, to put in her claim to kindly notice.





## CHAPTER IX.

**T**HE next morning, Reginald, accompanied by his young Indian, who earnestly desired to see the surrounding country, directed his steps to the green sunny valley through which rippled the little river that fertilized the island. They walked along its flowery banks till the boy complained of fatigue, and then they sat down, and both for a time remained in silent thought, till the Indian boy, starting from his reverie, looked earnestly in Reginald's face, while he inquired,

"What must I call you? Are you the chief or the king of the island?"

"I am neither king nor chief," Reginald answered, with a smile; "if I were, the birds and the goats would be my only subjects. I was the only human being on the island till it pleased heaven to send you here. You may call me friend, brother, or what you will, my name is Reginald de Tracy, but it will suffice if you call me Reginald, which is my name as a Christian."

"I don't think I can say it, Regi—Regi. I cannot say it," said the little fellow, with evident dissatisfaction. "I don't like it, Rigi—Regin, there again. But, Tracy, De Tracy, did you not say that was your name also?"

"I did, my boy. Do you like it better?"

"I do; I have heard it before now," said he.

"Where, where, when? how?" exclaimed the astonished Reginald.

"When the good Black Robe put the water on my mother's head," said the boy, "there were others with him, and I heard them call him Father de Tracy, and he looked so good, and his head was whiter than the whitest flower that grows in our land."

Reginald sprang from his mossy seat.

"Father de Tracy!" he exclaimed, "O, that I knew where to find him! He is my father's brother, Joseph! we believed him dead, but you tell me it was he who baptized your mother; I may then hope he is still living."

"Yes, he is not dead, for he poured the water on my mother's head."



"But where shall we seek for him?" said Reginald mournfully.

"Over the bright sea, on the island I left," said the boy.

"Then we must have a canoe, and how shall we be able to provide one? and I tremble to think of the danger to which he is exposed from the cruelty of your fierce father."

"My father will not hurt him," said the boy, "although he hates him; for he knows his God is very strong and powerful, and fears He would avenge any harm done to the Black Robes, for their God loves them, and they love Him; and will not this great good God, who is our God also, send us a canoe if we ask Him, since he can do all things?"

"You are quite right, my little friend, and if we pray to Him as we ought, and ask His blessed Mother to assist us, we have every reason to hope that He will not reject our petitions."

"Then you must teach me to pray."

"Willingly, my boy, and now I remember you have not yet seen my little church."

“Your church! O, yes. You said churches were for praying to God in. Have you got a church here?”

“There is not a real church upon the island. What I call my church is a little place I have erected to the honor of God and His holy Mother, and, humble as it is, Almighty God is too good and too gracious to despise the prayers we offer in it, because we have not a fine large church.”

And, taking the boy's hand, with the kindness of an affectionate elder brother, Reginald led him to the little temple he had constructed with so much diligence and labor. Kneeling down before the altar with his docile companion, and crossing himself, Reginald repeated aloud The Lord's Prayer, The Hail Mary, and the Apostles' Creed, while the Indian boy, of his own accord, repeated the words after him with extraordinary precision. Rising from their knees, Reginald led his young charge to the altar, and, directing his attention to the crucifix, inquired if he had seen anything like it before.

“Yes, yes, with the Black Robes.”



"Did you hear them say what it meant?"

"O, yes, I did hear them say very many things, but I cannot remember now. But my mother cried, and Agnes cried, and I cried when they did."

"Did you know why they cried?"

"I don't know quite. They were sorry for what they heard."

"You shall know it all in a little time. But you must try to remember exactly whatever I tell you."

The boy looked up, surprised at a remark that seemed to intimate a doubt of his sincerity, and, fixing his eyes steadfastly on Reginald, while he repeated the names of the Three Divine Persons, crossed himself without making any mistake, and with evident complacency inquired,

"Do I not remember what you tell me?"

Reginald would have replied, but was prevented by the impetuous little Indian, saying,

"You must make me know what all this means. The Black Robes say, and you say, there is but one God, why then do the Black Robes, and why do you, talk of three?"

“Not of three Gods,” answered Reginald, “but of Three Persons in One and the same God. There is not, there never was, and there never can be, more than One God, the Creator and Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, and of all things, seen and unseen. But in this One Only God there are Three distinct Persons, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, and this mystery is called the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, and these Three Divine Persons are Equal in all things, All-wise, All-powerful, and All-good.”

“Must I believe all this?”

“You must, or you cannot be a Christian. Every Christian must believe in the Blessed Trinity.”

“Can the bright Queen help me to believe this? I will ask her now if you tell me what to say.”

“Mother of God! teach me how to believe the truths taught by thy Divine Son. I wish to do His Will, ask of Him to enlighten my soul with His heavenly light.”

The little Indian repeated the prayer as well as he was able.



“Do I believe now?” he enquired, looking innocently at his instructor.

“I am sure you will believe all that every Christian must believe,” said Reginald.

“Then I must believe. Let me remember: Three in One! How wonderful!”

“But possible to Almighty God,” said Reginald; “and now I call to mind having heard people say in my own land that God once took pity on the people who dwelt in an island much larger than this, but just such another green flowery land, and sent a holy man to teach them to be Christians, for they did not know Him then, Who is the Only True and Living God, but worshipped ugly idols made of wood and stone, made by mens’ hands, just as your father does now; and the good man said everything he could think of to persuade them to leave their folly and wickedness, in worshipping false gods, who could neither help themselves nor those who were foolish enough to adore them, and told them of the One Only True God, in Whom there were Three distinct Persons, but he could not make them understand how Three distinct

Persons could be in One God, and the holy man stooped down, and pulled a little green sprig from a small plant that grew among the grass upon which he stood, and the little sprig had but one very small and slender stem, but at the top of it there were three pretty bright green leaves, all centred in the one little stem, and he held it up to the people, and then they believed all that he said, and became Christians and fervent adorers of the Blessed Trinity, and most devoted servants to the holy Mother of God ; and the people of that land are celebrated throughout the world for their firm adherence to the faith he preached to them, and for their veneration of the glorious Virgin Mary. And now, my young friend," Reginald continued, "you have received sufficient instruction for to-day ; to-morrow, should it please the Divine Majesty to bless our intention, we shall return hither, and I will resume the pleasing task so happily commenced."

The little Indian, with some degree of reluctance acceded to the proposal, and casting a look of affectionate enquiry at the



crucifix, of which he so longed to hear an explanation, knelt down with his young instructor before the sacred image. Having offered up a short ejaculatory prayer to our Crucified Lord, they returned home to the very great satisfaction of Colombe and the other members of the household.

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## CHAPTER X.

**T**HE next morning, soon after breakfast, Reginald, with the Indian boy, went forth, leaving the rest of the family to employ themselves at their own discretion during their absence, with the exception of Colombe, who, not choosing to be left behind any more, extended her wings, and without any ceremony perched on Reginald's shoulder, a practice by no means (as it may be remembered) unusual with her, and very contentedly accompanied them on their way. The boy's eyes sparkled with joy, and his heart throbbed with delight when he entered the little unostentatious arbor-church, and seeing

Reginald kneel before the crucifix, followed his example, his little hands crossed upon his breast, and his eyes fixed earnestly on the holy image.

The little fellow repeated the prayers after Reginald, which he was now tolerably well able to do, to the great satisfaction of his kind instructor, who was much pleased to hear his young charge spontaneously ask the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph to help him to be a Christian.

Having risen from their knees and seated themselves on the mossy bank before the altar, the Indian child, fixing his dark eyes sparkling with intelligence on Reginald, said, pointing to the crucifix, "I want to know what that is, and all about what it means?"

"You shall know all that you desire. But there are other things of which you should have a previous knowledge, to enable you to comprehend the stupendous miracle of mercy you behold represented there."

"Then why not tell me all the Black Robes say of what I see there?"

"It would require a Black Robe himself to do that."



The little Indian made an impatient gesture.

"My dear child," said Reginald, kindly, "I will answer you as well as I am able, but I cannot teach you like a Black Robe."

"The Mother of Mercy will help you," said the boy.

Reginald bowed his head in acquiescence to the observation, and, taking the child's hand, inquired, "Do you remember all that I told you yesterday?"

"I do. You said there is only One God, but there are Three Persons in God. I know it all very well. And God can see and hear, and know, and do all things. And I know how to name the Three Persons who are in One God; and you said the mystery of the Three Persons in One God is called the mystery of the Blessed Trinity; and I remember about the priest and the three pretty green leaves on the one stem."

Reginald smiled approvingly. "You have not a bad memory," he said, "and I feel that the more you know of the glory and goodness of God, the more you will love Him. Look yonder," he continued, "at the

beautiful bright blue sky, where the sun is shining with such dazzling light that our eyes cannot bear to look steadfastly upon it, and at this beautiful Green Island, with its flowery plains; hear the pretty birds sing, and admire the crystal waters of the river that winds its way through the valley: these, and the vast ocean and the moon and the stars, and all the people of other lands, God made them all."

"How did He do such great things?" said the boy.

"By His Own Almighty Word."

"Did He make you and me, and Colombe?"

"He did, and every living creature."

"Tell me, then, of what did He make them?"

"Out of nothing! By His Only Word."

The little Indian looked astonished and awestruck.

"His power is infinite," proceeded Reginald, "He spake, and all things were made."

The boy listened attentively, but did not reply.

"When God had made the world, with its



mountains and rivers, and woods and forests, and flowery plains, so brilliant and so beautiful, He stopped not there, but gave existence also to creatures capable of knowing, loving and serving Him with a reasonable service; He made the first man out of the dust of the earth, and named him Adam, and placed him in a garden of delights, and afterwards made the first woman and named her Eve; and these two, Adam and Eve, we call our first parents, and they lived in the beautiful garden. This garden was named Eden, and was full of trees bearing the most delicious fruits, and blooming with the most beautiful flowers of all kinds and colors. Adam and Eve were never to die, but after remaining a certain time in this world, God would remove them to His own bright kingdom, where they would live and be happy with Him forever. God gave them permission to eat of the fruit of every tree that was in the garden, with one exception, and He strictly forbade them to eat of the fruit of that tree, and told them if they disobeyed Him they should surely die. For some time they faithfully obeyed His command, but at last, sad



to relate, the woman Eve listened to the evil and envious suggestions of a wicked spirit named Satan, whom God had cast out of heaven with many other bad spirits, and condemned to a prison of eternal torments, for daring to rebel against His Divine Majesty. And she did eat of the fruit of the forbidden tree, and not content with the sin she had herself committed, persuaded Adam to eat of it also. God, from whom nothing can be concealed, beheld their disobedience, and He drove them out of the beautiful garden and condemned them to death, depriving them of all right to heaven. Then their hearts were filled with desolation and sorrow and despair, for the good they had lost, and the prospect of eternal misery that was before them, for they knew they could do nothing to appease the anger of God, and that nothing they could do would atone for the insult offered to the Most High. So there was nothing left for them but to be exiled forever, they and their posterity, from the presence of God and His holy angels."

"But the poor man and woman, did not the dear Mother of Mercy pray for them?" said the boy.



“Almighty God had not given us the Mother of Mercy then,” said Reginald—“We shall come to that part of our instructions another day—but to return to our offending first parents, God took compassion on their helplessness, and since nothing less than God Himself would suffice for an offering to obtain forgiveness for mankind, God the Son offered Himself to His Eternal Father to suffer and to die, and by shedding His Sacred Blood, blot out the decree of condemnation pronounced against the human race.”

“Could God die?” exclaimed the Indian boy, springing from his seat in evident surprise and consternation. “Is He dead? Did that great Almighty Being suffer and die?”

“God can never die: He is Holy, Strong, Immortal; but He loved us so well, that in His own infinite Wisdom, He devised a way by which our ransom would be paid, and a sufficient atonement offered to His Divine Majesty for the disobedience of the first man and woman. God the Son resolved to take upon Himself our human nature, and



become man to redeem and save us. The Eternal Trinity accepted the offering, and in the fulness of time God sent one of His brightest angels, the Blessed Gabriel, to a most beautiful and holy virgin named Mary. Though of royal descent, she was poor and lowly. She was espoused to a holy man named Joseph, like herself, of royal lineage, and led with him a most chaste and holy life in the little city of Nazareth. The angel of God, when he came into the presence of this lowly virgin who was alone at the time, saluted her with great reverence and said, 'Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.' She was troubled at his saying, and the angel said to her, 'Fear not Mary, for thou hast found favor with God.' He told her she should bring forth a son, and she should call His Name Jesus, and He should be great and should be called the Son of the Most High. And when she said, 'How shall this be done?' he answered, 'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the Power of the Most High shall overshadow thee, and therefore also, the Holy One that shall be born of



thee, shall be called the Son of God.' And she replied with a heart full of faith in God's power, 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord—be it unto me according to thy word.' And that instant the Eternal Son of God became incarnate in her spotless womb. In God's Providence it so fell out that some time afterwards Joseph and his virgin spouse were constrained to make a journey to a city called Bethlehem, and when they reached the city, weary and faint and cold, (for it was in the winter season,) there was no room for them in the inn, and they were obliged to take shelter in a cold cheerless stable, where in perfect resignation to the Will of Almighty God, they awaited His Divine Pleasure. The time was now come for the Saviour to be born, and the Blessed Virgin brought forth her Divine Son, and having wrapped Him up with the tenderest care, laid Him upon straw in a manger, the great Creator of heaven and earth, humbled to a little weeping helpless Babe."

"How wonderful!" exclaimed the little Indian, "that God, Who is so great and so powerful, and can do all things, would do so



much even for such a little creature as I am, for whom no one cares now, unless it be you and our Colombe."

Reginald smiled at the concluding remark.

"God has done a great deal more for you and for all the world, as you shall hear another day, but we must now go on with the subject of this morning's instruction."

"O do tell me, I want to hear more of the Divine Babe," said the Indian, his bright eyes flashing with intelligence and delight.

"As I have said," continued Reginald, "that little Infant, though in outward seeming no more than any other new-born child, was the great God of heaven. Can you believe this?"

"Why not? The Mother of Mercy will help me to do so."

"As soon as His Divine Son was born, the Eternal Father sent a vast number of His holy angels, and the sky, although it was midnight, was all radiant and brilliant with the brightness of these blessed spirits, and they adored the Heavenly Child, and filled the skies with the harmony of their voices, singing, 'Glory be to God on high, and



peace on earth to men of good will.' There were shepherds watching their sheep that night, and the angels appeared to them, telling them that they brought them tidings of great joy, for a Saviour was born unto them, and they would find Him in a stable, lying in a manger. The good shepherds therefore left their flocks, and went in all haste and adored their new born Lord, giving due honor also to His Blessed Mother and St. Joseph.

"Soon after the good shepherds had gone, there followed another manifestation of the new born Babe, for there came three great and wise kings from the east to adore Him. Beholding a most bright and beautiful star appear unexpectedly in the heavens, they were divinely inspired to know by that token that He was born Who should be the Saviour of mankind; and having provided themselves with rich gifts to offer to the Divine Infant, they, attended by a numerous retinue, departed from their own country to seek and adore Him, and the beautiful star went before them.

"The three kings journeyed on till they came to Bethlehem, and the beautiful star rested over the stable where the Lord lay.



“They entered the poor stable, and kneeling down before the new born God and Saviour, adored Him, and opening their treasures, they offered Him three rich gifts, gold, frankincense and myrrh.

“The Heavenly Infant smiled graciously upon them, showing by His sweet Countenance, how pleasing their faith was to Him; and they rejoiced exceedingly in the happiness of beholding Him; and having devoutly saluted His Virgin Mother and St. Joseph, they departed to return into their own country.”

“Did they get home safe to their own land?” inquired the Indian child.

“They did my little friend, and several years after, water was poured on their heads, and they were consecrated to the service of Almighty God, and became zealous preachers of the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, and finally suffered death for His Name; and here let me tell you, that at the Holy Name of Jesus every knee should bend, every head should bow, with devotion, reverence, and love.”

“Then I shall kneel down now, for every



time I have spoken it," said the little Indian, falling on his knees and making the sign of the holy cross.

"You improve daily, my good child," said Reginald, "but it is now time we should think of returning home."

"You have not told me the names of the three kings," said the boy, as he arose from his knees.

"You will burden you memory with a heavy load," said Reginald, smiling. "The names of the three wise kings were Gasper, Melchior, and Balthazar."

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## CHAPTER XI.

**R**EGINALD'S return with his young charge and the faithful Colombe, was greeted, as usual, by the rest of the family, who had become rather impatient at their long absence.

The pretty green birds fluttered around the Indian boy, and the little goats leaped about so merrily, that they upset Colombe's cage and threw down the poor old tortoise, before

order was sufficiently restored to permit Reginald to spread the repast upon the grass before the door.

The boy could speak of nothing else during their meal but the wonderful things he had listened to in the morning with so much delight, adverting to them with a degree of intelligence that afforded infinite satisfaction to his instructor, who could not, while he contemplated the fine expressive countenance of the amiable child, divest himself of a bright presentiment that his interesting little pupil, in after years, might himself be associated with the zealous missionaries who labored so successfully in propagating the faith in the new world.

“You have still more wonders to hear,” he said, “but you must take time to meditate upon what you already know.”

The young Indian made no reply, every moment he remained in ignorance of the divine mysteries was an age to him. Reginald did not interrupt his meditations, and for some time he continued apparently lost in thought, till suddenly breaking silence, he exclaimed, “The Mother of Mercy will send



us a good Black Robe, he will help you, and we will show him our pretty little church. And then," looking in Reginald's face he inquired, "will he not wear the same bright garments, shining like those the black Robes wore when Agnes took me with her, and I saw the lights burning, and Agnes told me God was there?"

"We must persevere in prayer to His blessed Mother to obtain that favor for us, and we know He will not refuse her anything she asks."

"I am glad of that, I have so many things to ask, and I want to get them all. Do you think the bright Queen will grow weary of hearing me?"

"I am sure she will not, as long as you ask only what it is consistent with the honor and glory of God for you to obtain."

"I would not ask her anything to make Him angry with me if I knew it," said the child, quickly.

"Would you ask to be a chief, or a prince, or a warrior like your father?"

"No, no!" he replied with a degree of vehemence, so different from his customary meekness that Reginald was startled.

"No, no! not like my father, he does not love the great good God who was born in the stable. He would not have water on his head nor hear the Black Robe, and he—" the child looked in Reginald's face, and burst into tears.

Reginald took the child's hands, and, pointing towards heaven, he affectionately exclaimed: "You are thinking of your mother. She is up there with God and His own Blessed Mother, and she prays for you there. Do not grieve, then, my child, for she is where she will be eternally happy, and if you do the will of God in this world, you will be happy with her forever in the next. And now let me hear some of the many things you would ask our Blessed Lady to obtain for you from her Divine Son."

"I would ask her to pray to Him to forgive my cruel Indian father, and make him love the Black Robes, and do all they tell him to do, and I would ask her to take care of poor Agnes and send us a Black Robe."

He paused for a moment, apparently trying to call to mind the numerous favors he wished to obtain.



“Would you ask our dear Mother to help us out of this lonely island?” said Reginald.

“Lonely!” cried the boy. “Did you not tell me God is everywhere? Can we be lonely if God is with us? And did you not say that He gives to every one a bright beautiful angel who never leaves us, though we do not see him?”

“You say well, my child; but my meaning was that here we cannot serve and honor God with the same dignity and solemnity we could if we had the happiness of living in a Christian country, where all the people united in adoring the One True God, and in paying due honor to the Virgin Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ. And now let me hear what more you would wish to obtain.”

“You will laugh at me if do.”

“Never mind that: I am very anxious to know what are your expectations for the future, if it should please Almighty God to permit that you live to be a man.”

“Then I mean to ask the dear Mother of Mercy that I may be a good Black Robe myself.”

“And you may be sure she will beg that



favor for you from her dear Son, if it is in accordance with His Divine Will. And now I think we need not say any more this evening, and when we have taken a walk upon the strand, and sung our vesper hymns, said our night prayers, and seen our little companions properly lodged for the night, it will be time for us to think of retiring to rest."

The inmates of that peaceful dwelling slept tranquilly till they were awakened soon after sunrise the next morning by the vigilant Colombe, and obedient to the well known signal, Reginald and his little friend were speedily up and on their knees, and the accents of their morning thanksgiving mingling in sweet unison, were borne by angels to the Eternal Throne.

Their next care was to provide the family breakfast, a duty in which the Indian boy had already acquired sufficient experience to give his benefactor considerable assistance, particularly as the little goats were on such friendly terms with him that occasionally, when they were in good humor, they allowed him to milk them, a privilege of which he was not a little proud.



Breakfast was soon over that morning, and the two friends, having risen from their flowery table, the boy, with a look of entreaty at Reginald, was the first to break silence.

"I want to go where the altar is, and see the cross with the Saviour upon it."

"With the image of the Saviour upon it," said Reginald watching him attentively.

"I know that! I know that!" quickly replied the child. "I know it is not the real Lord Jesus, but it looks like Him when He was put on the cross to die for us."

"You are quite right, my little friend," said Reginald, "and your wish shall be complied with without any delay. Let us proceed at once to our little church."

And away they went, with light hearts and light steps to the little structure hallowed by their devotion.

The young Indian had scarcely crossed the threshold before he was on his knees, and as he prayed aloud, Reginald could not help smiling at the number of favors he begged from the Divine Majesty, and the confidence with which he every now and then cried, "Mother of Mercy, dear Mother of Mercy!"



ask every thing for me and for Reginald and Agnes, and take care of our poor Colombe, and send us a Black Robe."

Reginald did not interrupt him; and when he had prayed till he could think of nothing more to pray for, he rose up very contentedly, when his kind instructor, having implored the Divine benediction, and begged the gracious assistance of the Mother of Mercy, they sat down, and Reginald commenced the conversation by asking the impatient little boy, if he remembered where they left off.

"I don't forget," said he. "There was the dear little Child Jesus born in the stable; there was the holy Virgin Mother and good St. Joseph; and good men with pretty sheep and lambs, and a bright star and bright spirits, and great rich kings wearing crowns, bearing fine presents for the Son of God, Who is the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, and is One and the Same God with the Father and the Holy Ghost. And now I have told you all this, you must tell me all you said we should talk about to-day."

"Then I must begin by telling you that



some time after the departure of the wise kings from Bethlehem, our Blessed Lady, with her chaste spouse St. Joseph, carried the Heavenly Child to Jerusalem, and brought Him to the Temple, a most magnificent building dedicated to the honor and worship of Almighty God, and presented Him to the Divine Majesty, and a venerable old man named Simeon took Him into his arms, and confessed Him to be the promised Redeemer of mankind; and there was an aged and devout woman called Anna, who praised and gave glory to the Divine Infant at the same time."

"I wish I had been there," cried the Indian boy; "to have seen the Son of God and His Blessed Mother, and the good St. Joseph; I would have prayed to the dear little Child, and asked Him to bless me. But tell me more; I must know all about how the Holy Child Jesus came to be on the crucifix."

Reginald resumed. "I must tell you, my good little friend, that a very bad and wicked man was king in the country at the time Jerusalem was visited by the three wise kings,

and he told the good kings to come and tell him when they found the Holy Infant; but an angel ordered them not to do so, and they went away and did not come to him any more. When the wicked king, who was named Herod, found the wise kings did not return to him, he ordered all the new-born baby boys about Bethlehem to be put to death, intending by that means to effect the death of the Blessed Infant, but the Almighty Father had sent one of His angels to St. Joseph who told him to rise, and take the young Child and His Mother, and fly with them into Egypt, and remain there till he came to him again."

"How cruel!", exclaimed the Indian boy, his eyes flashing with all their native fire; "If I had been there, I would have killed that wicked Herod if I were a man."

Reginald proceeded, without making any remark upon the exclamation: "St. Joseph set out the same night with the Blessed Child and His holy Mother. The way to Egypt was long and dreary, but they arrived there in safety after having encountered many hardships. When the Blessed Infant



entered Egypt, unable to endure the presence of the Living God, all the idols of that land fell down upon the ground and they had not power to speak any more."

"Speak!" cried the little Indian with a look and voice of amazement, "were they not wood and stone? Could they speak?"

"No, my little friend," said Reginald, "they, were as you justly say, wood and stone, lifeless, motionless, and speechless, but evil spirits used to speak through them to deceive the people, who were wicked enough and silly enough to consult them. But the Infant God silenced them for ever, and they spoke no more."

"How good, how great, and how powerful was the Holy Child," cried the Indian boy, admiringly.

Reginald proceeded: "The Blessed Infant with His Mother and St. Joseph, remained for some years in Egypt, till the Almighty Father sent the angel to tell them to return into their own land. The Holy Family did so, and for some years lived quietly in a cottage at Nazareth; but when the Blessed Child had reached the age of

twelve years His holy parents went to Jerusalem, taking Him with them, and it pleased His Eternal Father that they should lose Him for three days, but they found Him the fourth day in the temple, disputing with the doctors or learned men, who were astonished at His wisdom. The Divine Child then obediently returned with His Blessed Mother and her spouse to their home in Nazareth, and was subject to them, working with St. Joseph at his trade of carpenter. He grew up in grace and wisdom, dwelling with them in peace and holiness until the death of the good St. Joseph, the Blessed Jesus having about that time attained His thirtieth year."

"And where did the good St. Joseph's soul go?"

"It went to a place of rest, where the souls of all the holy people, who died before our Lord suffered for us, were awaiting His coming to deliver them, and take them with Him to His eternal Kingdom. Our Blessed Saviour, soon after St. Joseph's death, commenced preaching and teaching the truths of eternal life, and many people believed in



Him and acknowledged Him for their God and Lord, and long expected Saviour, and some voluntarily gave up all things to follow Him; and He performed many great works, and wrought many miracles to confirm them in their faith."

"I want to know what a miracle is?" inquired the boy, quickly interrupting him.

"It is an extraordinary manifestation of the power of God, by performing what is contrary to the order of nature, and can only be effected by Him, although He sometimes gives power to some of His chosen servants to work miracles in His Name. And I must tell you, for the honor of the Mother of God, and to show you how much He loves to grant whatever she asks, that it was at her request He wrought His first miracle; but you have heard so much to-day, it will not do to fatigue you any more at this time."

"I am not tired at all!" cried his anxious auditor.

Reginald smiled, and continued: "Our Blessed Lord and His Mother were invited to a marriage feast, and it happened that the

wine failed in quantity, and there was none left to pour out to the guests. Our dear Lady took compassion upon them, and said to her Divine Son, 'They have no wine.' And though He did not seem inclined to relieve them, and said His hour was not yet come, His Blessed Mother knew very well that He would grant what she asked, and said to the servants, 'Do what he tells you,' and presently He bade them fill up the water pots with water and serve it to the guests, and they did according to His command; and when the chief steward tasted it, he found it was much finer wine than that with which they were first served."

"I wish I was alive then, and at that feast," said the boy, thoughtfully, "that I might have tasted that wonderful wine."

Reginald gazed earnestly and silently upon him for a while, and again a prophetic light beamed upon his soul, while he said with more than usual solemnity—

"The time to come may unfold much for you, my dear good child. The ways of the Divine Wisdom are impenetrable to our weak comprehension. Heaven has wonder-



fully preserved you, perhaps for some great end, and you may yet be called to partake of a Wine infinitely more holy, more precious, and more excellent, than the wine so miraculously supplied at the marriage feast."

"Than the wine made by our Lord Himself?" cried the little Indian, looking very incredulous, and rather surprised, at Reginald.

"You cannot now comprehend my meaning," said his instructor, "but another time I will endeavor to explain to you the hope I have conceived of your future; we are both fatigued with so much speaking, I shall therefore conclude this morning's conversation by imploring the blessing of God and His holy Mother, upon our expectations."



## CHAPTER XII.

**T**HE next morning beheld the two friends again kneeling before the crucifix in the little church, devoutly reciting the Holy Rosary. Having concluded it, they took places as usual, when the young Indian, without allowing his friend a moment's time for reflection, exclaimed, in accents sufficiently loud to indicate his impatience,

"Why don't you talk, I want to know everything."

"Then I must not lose any time," said Reginald, smiling. "Where did we leave off yesterday?"

"At the water changed into wine. And then you talked strangely of a finer wine than that which our Lord made at the marriage feast."

Reginald smiled. "Our Lord," he commenced, "performed many other great and wonderful works, which it is not necessary for me to speak of; be content for the present to learn only what is absolutely necessary for you to know. If you persevere as you



have begun, I shall soon be able to teach you to read, and having a book in my possession that contains all you can possibly desire to know, I shall gladly place it in your hands as soon as you are capable of using it."

"Then I shall have to wait a long time—a very long time," said the boy; "but the dear Mother of Mercy will send a good Black Robe to say all I want to hear before then."

"We shall get on better," said his friend, kindly, "if you are less impatient. I shall now proceed at once to that awfully mysterious time, when the Divine Mercy was wonderfully exemplified in the great work of our redemption.

"Convinced by the greatness and number of His wonderful works, the number of believers in our Lord Jesus daily increased, and He chose twelve men out of those that acknowledged His divine mission, whom He called Apostles, and they accompanied Him wherever He went, and He taught them all that was then necessary for them to know, and upon one occasion He took three of

them to the top of a mountain, and showed Himself to them clothed in all the Glory of His Divine Majesty."

The Indian boy did not break silence with his lips, but his looks spoke eloquently. "I wish I was there, too," they seemed to say, "to have seen Him in His Glory."

"The people in the meantime determined to make Him king, and, on one occasion, when it pleased Him to make a public entry into Jerusalem, the people followed Him, carrying palm branches, and strewing their garments in His way, while they cried aloud, Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who cometh in the Name of the Lord."

"But the Blessed Jesus Whose kingdom was not of this world, hid Himself from them, and these very people, only a few days after, forgetful of the benefits they had received from Him, and yielding to the malicious suggestions of their priests, who envied Him, and sought to take away His life, loaded Him with insults, and demanded that He should be put to death."

"How wicked! how very wicked!" sobbed the Indian boy, while his dark flashing eyes



glistened through the tears he could no longer restrain.

“It was but a few nights after His entry into Jerusalem, that being at supper with His disciples, our Lord, to give us an example of humility, condescended to wash their feet and dried them with a towel. Then, resuming His place at the supper table, He uttered the fearful announcement that one of these, His chosen ones, would betray Him. Yes, alas! there was a traitor amongst them, who, for a few pieces of silver, had agreed with the envious priests, to deliver Him into their hands.”

The young Indian's eyes sparkled with fierce fire, and his countenance showed all the wild passions of his untamed race, when provoked to fury, while in a voice half stifled with indignation and sorrow, he gave utterance to the feelings of his soul.

“If I was there that night, and was as big as my father, and had his spear and his arrows, I would have killed that false bad man myself.”

“Then would our Blessed Lord have been not well pleased with you, for when after-

wards one of His Apostles drew his sword to defend Him, He desired him to sheathe it, telling him that if He only asked His Father, He would send Him legions of angels to defend Him. His words were the cause of much grief and consternation to the faithful eleven, but He gave them to understand who was the traitor, and they were very sorrowful. Then did our Lord take bread and blessed it, gave It to them, saying, 'Take and eat This, for This is My Body, That shall be given for you.' Then He took the cup with wine, and blessed it and gave It to them, saying, 'Drink ye all of This, for This is the Chalice of My Blood of the New Testament, Which shall be shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins.'


"And this was the first Mass, the institution of the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar in which He continues, and will continue, to be to the end of the world really present with His Church, having left to His Apostles the power of celebrating the same Divine Mystery which from them has continued to descend to their lawfully appointed successors. But tell me, my young friend, are you ready to believe all this?"



Mother will adopt you for her son, and your own dear guardian angel, and St. Joseph, will give great glory and praise to God for His goodness to you. We shall leave off now, for you have heard quite sufficient to think of during the day; to-morrow the subject of our conversation shall be the Sufferings and Death of our Divine Lord, which almost immediately followed the institution of the Blessed Sacrament.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

HEN Reginald and his young companion returned home, the minds of both were so deeply impressed with the greatness of the Divine Mysteries that had so lately occupied their attention, that neither felt disposed to pay much regard to the joyful indications of good will with which their return was welcomed, as usual, by the harmless members of their household, who nevertheless bore their seeming neglect with the utmost good humor, taking their accustomed places

in perfect harmony. Colombe, who went and returned with them, perching as usual (without any ceremony) on Reginald's arm. The remainder of the day passed away in undisturbed tranquility, as indeed, did every day, for the little family lived in complete concord.

The next morning beheld the two friends seated in the little church, their attention riveted on a small painting of the Crucifixion which Reginald held in his hand. It was one that he found in the box with the books already mentioned. The little Indian's dark eyes were glistening through his tears, for Reginald was recounting the mournful events that attended the sufferings of our Lord.

He had got as far as the entrance of our Lord Jesus with His eleven Apostles into the garden of Olives, and had told how He led three of them apart and bade them watch with Him while He prayed a little way off, for His Soul was sorrowful even unto death, when he was interrupted by the voice of his youthful auditor exclaiming, "And the dear bright Lady His Mother, where was she then?"



“We may easily believe,” resumed Reginald, “that she who was the ever faithful companion of her Son, as far as possible following in His way, was not far from Him on that sad night, and that her heart was penetrated with grief for the sufferings she knew but too well awaited her Divine Son. But to proceed, our Blessed Lord prayed to His Eternal Father that, if it were His Will, that bitter chalice, by which He meant His passion, might pass away from Him, but He submitted entirely to His Almighty Father’s Will, and so great was the Agony He endured, that His Sacred Blood gushed from every Pore and stained His garments and the earth on which He lay.”

The little Indian looked very mournfully into Reginald’s face, but remained silent.

“Our Lord repeated His prayer thrice. But there would have been no redemption for us if His Adorable Blood were not shed to purchase it, and the Eternal Son would not retract the Offering of Himself as a Sacrifice for the sins of the world. His Heavenly Father, however, sent one of His angels to comfort Him, who raised Him up and

adored Him. The angel being gone, He returned to His disciples, and just then a party of armed men came and seized Him, which in mercy to us He permitted them to do. The next day, having most cruelly scourged Him at a pillar, and pressed a crown of sharp thorns on His Sacred Head, they led Him to a hill not far from the city, and nailed Him to a cross, as you see here represented on the crucifix, upon which He expired, after having prayed to His Father to forgive His cruel enemies. Have we not then a just cause to venerate the sacred crucifix which continually reminds us of the Infinite Goodness of our dear Saviour?"

The Indian boy could only answer by his tears, but after a silence of some moments, he said, sorrowfully, "And His bright Mother?"

"Was with Him all the time: she never left Him until His Sacred Body was taken down from the cross and laid in a sepulchre."

"But He is not there now! Did you not teach me to say, He rose again from the dead?"

"You are perfectly right, my child," said



Reginald; "our Saviour rose again on the third day, glorious and immortal, from the tomb, and remained on earth forty days to show that He was risen indeed. But I should have told you that when our Blessed Lord expired upon the cross, a fearful darkness covered the whole earth, and the rocks were rent, and there was also a terrible earthquake, and the graves opened, and the dead arose and were seen by many, for all nature was convulsed with horror when the God of nature died."

"But what was done to the bad men who had Him crucified?"

"Many of them were converted at the sight of the prodigies I have related, and vast numbers, taught afterwards by the Apostles, believed and acknowledged Him for their Saviour; but the greater number remained hardened in their unbelief, and the sentence denounced against them remains in force even to this day, for their descendants are no longer a nation, but are scattered throughout the whole world, without a temple and without a king."

"But did not the Lord ascend again to heaven?"



"He did. Having remained forty days on earth, He ascended into heaven from the top of Mount Olivet, accompanied by a vast number of angels, and the holy souls of the good people who could not enter heaven until, by His death and Passion, He opened its everlasting doors to mankind."

"And you tell me He is there still," said the boy, inquiringly; "but is He not somewhere else? Have you not said that He would be always with us, when we talked about what He did when He was at supper with the good men?"

"God is always with us," answered his friend; "His Majesty fills the heavens and the earth. But our Blessed Saviour, as I have already told you, remains with us in an especial manner in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar; and we must continue to pray more and more to our Lady, to ask her dear Son to send us a priest to celebrate that Holy Sacrament here."

"Yes, yes," cried the Indian boy, with a degree of impetuosity that startled his patient instructor, "we will pray to her and she will hear us some time. But I want to know



what she did when her Son went up into the sky.”

“When our Lord was upon the cross He commended her to the care of one of the Apostles whom He tenderly loved. This was St. John the Evangelist, whom He also commended to her as a son, and she dwelt in his house during the remaining years she lived in this world. When it pleased God the time should draw near for Him to take her to His Eternal Kingdom, she prayed to her Son that all the holy Apostles might be present at her departure; and her petition did not ascend in vain, for they were, with the exception of St. Thomas, all miraculously transported from the various countries in which they were to be present at the deathbed of their dear Lady and Queen. Their presence was welcomed with maternal affection by the Virgin Mother, with whom they remained till it was God’s Holy Will to take her to Himself; and when her blessed soul had departed from her pure body, the Apostles carried her blessed remains to the sepulchre, and remained there for three days, keeping watch night and day.



All that time they heard a most sweet and celestial harmony of angelic voices, singing around her tomb; but on the third day it ceased, and was heard no more, and they were preparing to depart, when St. Thomas (who was, as I told you before, the only one of the Apostles who was absent from the deathbed of the glorious Mother of God,) arrived at the sepulchre, grievously lamenting that he had not come in time to see her while yet living, and, at his earnest request, they took compassion upon him, and opened the sepulchre that he might at least have the consolation of beholding her blessed body; but how great was their astonishment and indeed their joy to find only the linen in which she was enfolded remaining in the sepulchre, together with a quantity of lilies and roses that gave a most delightful fragrance, but the virginal body of the Mother of God was not there. Her Divine Son could not suffer the pure body from which His own Sacred Humanity was taken, to see corruption, but had by His Omnipotent Power assumed her both body and soul, into heaven where He crowned her Queen of



Angels and Saints, and fixed her throne of immortal glory next to His Own, while all the heavenly host acknowledged her their Queen, and the sweet anthem, 'Hail Mary! Mother of God! Queen of heaven and earth!' filled the bright regions of bliss with harmony."

" 'Hail Mary! Mother of God! Queen of heaven and earth!' " echoed the soft sweet voice of the Indian boy, whose bright eyes, sparkling with intelligence and hope, proclaimed in their silent eloquence, how joyfully and how truly he exulted in the assumption and coronation of the Queen of Heaven.

"I wish I could see her!" he said. "Do you think she will let me look at her with my own eyes?"

"She has sometimes, though rarely, appeared to some of her chosen servants, but I cannot take upon myself to say that she will be pleased to confer so great a privilege upon you."

"But she will listen to me when I pray to her, and she will help us and will not leave us without a Black Robe."

"She helps all her children, my little friend," said Reginald. "One of her titles, is, 'Our Lady, the Help of Christians.'"

The Indian boy's eyes filled with tears; Reginald understood him.

"But you desire with all your heart to become a Christian? Do not be cast down; you will soon, I hope, have the happiness of receiving the sacrament of Holy Baptism."

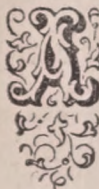
"And our Lady, the Help of Christians, will help me in the meantime, will she not?"

"Most assuredly she will. Do you not recollect that our Lady, the Help of Christians, is also the Mother of Mercy?"





## CHAPTER XIV.

ND our Lady, the Help of Christians, did help her youthful suppliant. Not many days after, a Spanish vessel homeward bound, anchored near the Green Island, put out a boat to get a fresh supply of water, having run short of that necessary article.

There was an aged Jesuit Father on board, whose years did not prevent him from accompanying the sailors in the boat, so great was his anxiety to discover if the island was inhabited and if so, whether by Christians or pagans.

It was a bright morning. The sea sparkled in the sunlight, the woods and valleys of the Green Island were echoing to the matin songs of the feathered choristers, when Reginald and his little Indian companion, attracted by the splashing of the oars and the songs of the sailors as the boat neared the land, hastened to the beach. To their inexpressible astonishment and delight, they saw the vessel lying at anchor not far from

the shore, and the boat's crew, who had just landed, busily employed in arranging their water casks along the strand.

Reginald stood for some moments, alternately gazing at the ship and the sailors on shore, but too much overpowered by his own feelings to make any distinct observation, till recalled to himself by the voice of the young Indian joyfully exclaiming :

“Our Lady, the Help of Christians, our own dear Mother of Mercy has heard us and helped us! Look yonder! look yonder! there is a Black Robe.”

Then it was, Reginald for the first time beheld the venerable father, whose eyes were at that moment directed in fixed attention to the place where they stood.

He drew near and they advanced to meet him; and a few moments sufficed for mutual explanation. The first idea was to take Reginald and the Indian boy on board the ship and convey them to Europe, but the idea was soon discarded. The vessel was already overcrowded with passengers, and it was not likely the captain would consent to add to the number.



“But you must not be discouraged upon that account,” said the Father; “for it is in contemplation to send missionaries from Lima to explore these islands, many of which are believed to be inhabited, and some of our Fathers have applied to a rich merchant for a passage on board one of his ships this year; and, as he is a zealous Catholic, and willing to contribute to the utmost of his power in the propagation of the faith, I have not the least doubt of his cheerfully granting their request. In the meantime, you may rest assured that I shall avail myself of the first opportunity to make known your abode upon the island.”

The Father, who was an Englishman, spoke in that language, of which the young Indian had already acquired sufficient knowledge to be able to comprehend tolerably well the substance of what the reverend father said.

“But will you not stay with us now?” he exclaimed in the same language, intelligibly enough, “you for whom we have prayed so long to our dear Lady, now that she has heard us, and sent you here, she will not be well pleased with you if you leave us.”



"I would gladly remain here," said Father Mowbray, for that was his name, "but I am obliged to proceed immediately to Spain on business of importance, in obedience to the command of my superior."

"Then why did you come at all?" sobbed the Indian boy.

"I wished to ascertain if the island was inhabited, and if so, if the people were Christians."

"Then make a Christian of me," quickly answered the boy, "I have begged our dear Lady to send us a good Black Robe, who would baptize me; and I want to see the lights shining, and the garments with the fine flowers, and to see the silver cup, and see the smoke that smells so sweet, and if you are a Black Robe cannot you do all this?"

"I can, and will baptize you, my child," said the Father, kindly, "but time will not allow me to do more at present. As soon as the sailors have filled their casks, I must, of necessity, return with them to the ship. But our dear Lady will be watchful over your abode here, she will intercede with her



Divine Son in your behalf, and He will in His own good time send you a father to supply all that is wanting to your spiritual necessities."

"It will be full two hours at least," said Reginald, "before the sailors can fill their casks and carry them from the river to the boat, we shall therefore have time to show you our church, where, if you please, you can confer upon my little Indian friend the blessing he is so anxious to obtain, and from thence you can accompany us to our abode and see the rest of the family."

The Black Robe looked rather surprised at the latter intimation.

"There is only our Colombe," cried the boy, "and Robin, and—but you will see them all when you come."

"I shall be very happy," said the Father, smiling, "for I daresay I shall find a very amiable party to welcome me."

Reginald and the overjoyed Indian conducted the good Father to the sylvan church, which he contemplated with satisfaction and pleasure, so extraordinary was the ingenuity displayed by the young architect in



its erection, and the skilful arrangement of the ornaments with which it was decorated. And there before the little altar, fragrant with many colored sweet smelling flowers blossoming on the trees and shrubs that clustered around it, the venerable Father imparted to the young Indian the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, in which at the boy's own request he received the name of Joseph, and having offered up their grateful thanksgivings to Almighty God, and poured forth the warm effusions of their hearts in joyful salutations to the Sacred Virgin Mother for the blessings obtained through her intercession, (the young neophyte not forgetting to commend himself to the care of St. Joseph,) they all proceeded to the abode of the two friends, where Colombe, far from being disconcerted by the advent of their venerable guest, fluttered around him to testify her satisfaction at his arrival, while the little Robins too did not fear to approach, but came hopping around him. The other inmates were speedily reconciled to the presence of their friendly visitor.

Reginald produced the choicest of his



store to regale the aged Father, who cheerfully partook of the refreshments so kindly offered. It was with no small satisfaction that Reginald learned from Father Mowbray, that he was well acquainted with Father de Tracy, who would, it was by no means unlikely, be one of the Fathers appointed to visit the island. And to augment Joseph's happiness, who was almost frantic with joy since his baptism, Reginald having briefly related all he knew of the child's history, Father Mowbray told them there was an Indian at that very time on board the ship, who was a Christian, and a native of the island of which the boy's father was the chief. This man had in his hearing given an account of the flight of Agnes with her young charge, for whose supposed loss she was inconsolable, having herself with the others who were in the canoe providentially escaped from a watery grave.

By this time the sailors having filled their casks, and being ready to depart, Reginald and Joseph accompanied the venerated Black Robe to the shore, and having assisted him into the boat, they watched it till it

reached the vessel which was speedily under weigh, the two friends remaining on the beach, till she was lost to sight.

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## CHAPTER XV.

**Y**OUR Lady the Help of Christians, will be sure to send us a Black Robe again before long," said Joseph, looking anxiously at his friend as they turned from the shore and directed their steps homeward.

"We may be sure she will never be unmindful of us, but we must wait with patience till the appointed time comes when it will please Almighty God, moved by her maternal supplications, to grant the blessing we are so anxious to obtain; and now that you are a Christian you can pray to Him with more love, more hope, and more confidence, and beg of His Blessed Mother with increasing fervor, to continue to advocate your cause."

"And St. Joseph—and the bright angel; I must ask them to pray for me," said he.

"And you may be sure they will not reject your petition," added Reginald.



“How good God is,” resumed the boy, “how very good, to listen to a poor little Indian boy even before he was a Christian, and the dear bright Lady, His Mother—is she not good to listen to me?” And thus conversing they reached home, where the never failing welcome of their harmless household awaited them.

Days, weeks, and months again passed away, but nothing occurred either to engage their attention, or animate their hope. Joseph was becoming hourly more impatient for the arrival of the long expected ship, with a Black Robe on board, but Reginald, though he sighed in secret for the coming of the vessel, carefully concealed from his Indian companion his uneasiness at its long protracted delay.

It was nearly twelve months after Father Mowbray's visit to the island, when Reginald one day while employed in making some addition to their abode, fell down and sprained his ankle, an accident which, though it seemed trivial, compelled him to stay at home for some days. Joseph in the meantime was indefatigable in his attendance

upon him, never leaving him, except to pay a daily visit to the church. It happened, however, that one day when Reginald's ankle was nearly well, but not sufficiently to allow him to walk many steps at a time, Joseph, whose return from his visit to the church he was anxiously expecting, did not make his appearance at the usual time. Aware that the boy would not willingly protract his absence, Reginald began to fear that some accident had befallen him; and after waiting a considerable time, determined to make an effort to discover if possible, the cause of his non-appearance.

He made the effort, but the exertion was too much for his sprained ankle, and he was compelled to return painfully to his home, where he sat silent and sad.

Hour after hour he waited, but Joseph did not return, and Reginald's fears for the boy's safety became insupportable. He limped painfully to the door and called aloud, "Joseph! Joseph! Joseph!" again and again, but there was no response. There was one little creature, however, who seemed to understand the cause of his anxiety and dis-



tress; that one was Colombe. She was well accustomed to hear him call Joseph, and to see the boy's never failing appearance at the call. What her ideas were, I shall not pretend to define, but she came cooing and fluttering around Reginald and then away she flew.

Poor Reginald knew not what to think. He watched on, and the summer evening was progressing to its close; he was sad, very sad, and instinctively took out his Rosary, and, hardly conscious of what he was doing, he commenced reciting it for the safe return of his young companion.

He had just concluded the chaplet when he was startled by the arrival of Colombe, who, if she did not bring an olive branch in her bill, brought what at that moment was infinitely more welcome to Reginald, for close behind, weary enough, and with a countenance that spoke volumes, followed the Indian boy.

"Joseph, Joseph!" exclaimed Reginald, "what has happened to you? I attempted to go in search of you, but was compelled to return."

"I thought you would," said Joseph, pant-

ing for breath. "But you won't be angry when you know all; and you will thank our dear Lord, and His Blessed Mother and good St. Joseph, and the bright angels, when you hear what I have to say. And pretty Colombe there, if it had not been for her, I would never have found you again."

He could say no more, exhausted with fatigue, and agitated by feelings he could not control, he sank down at Reginald's feet, and burst into tears.

"Don't try to speak any more now," said Reginald, affectionately taking his hand. "You are safe and I am happy, come and take some food, and you will be able to tell me what has happened, or to-morrow morning if you like it better, I will hear all you have got to say."

The Indian boy looked gratefully at his kind friend, and having silently partaken of the food placed before him, turned to Reginald, and said, "I am too much tired now, to-morrow you shall hear all."

Reginald kindly agreed, and in a few moments more his little friend was fast asleep.

The next morning Joseph took the first opportunity of relating what had happened.



“I left our dear little church,” he said, “after I had said my Rosary and arranged the flowers on the altar, and was on my way home when, looking towards the sea, I saw far, far off, one, two, three, four canoes, and there were men in them, and they fought, and I lay down that they might not see me, for I wanted to come here to tell you, but before very long they all went away, and I watched to see that none of them would return. Presently I saw a man in the water, who was struggling very much to get to this island: he could swim very well, and, as he got nearer to the land, I could see that he looked like a chief, and I was very sad, for I did not know what we should do if he got here. He did get upon the land, where, you know, the two palm trees are growing near the shore, that is a good way from the place where I lay, and I thought of running home to you, but just then I could see that he was wounded and bleeding, and he tried to staunch the blood with his robe, and was endeavoring to make his way into the wood, and so I got up and followed him, and I could see he was getting fainter and fainter;

I managed to keep him in sight without being seen, but just as I had nearly come up to him, he gave a very loud groan and fell down upon the cold earth, and I ran to him, and his robe of skins was covered with blood, and I looked in his face, and I saw it was my father.”

For some moments Joseph remained silent. Reginald did not speak, and the boy continued—

“I talked to him, and he knew me, and said he was very sorry for what he did to my mother, and that he was dying himself now. I cried, and he cried, and I spoke to him of the good Black Robes, and I said I was a Christian now, and I told him what you told me, and he said he would be a Christian, and I ran to the river and brought water in a cocoa-nut shell, and baptized him just as you told me, and as the Black Robe said; and then he looked very glad, and I told him he would see my mother in heaven, and I said I would go and bring you, but he uttered some words very faintly, telling me he could not live, so I stayed with him, and he died very soon after he was baptized,



saying, 'Jesus, Mary, and Joseph,' as I told him. I got moss and leaves and covered him over as well I could, and I knew it was getting late, so I marked the place with palm branches and turned my steps homeward, as I thought, but my eyes were filled with tears, and, after a while I found I had gone astray. I tried to find the right way, but the more I tried, the farther I went out of my way, and I cried very loud and called your name, but you did not hear me, and I thought I should have been in the wood all night, when, all at once, our dear Colombe came cooing and flying to me, and then I thought our dear Lady had sent her, and I thought of the dear bright angel. Colombe flew on before me, and I followed her, and to my great joy we were soon at our dear little church, where I rested for a while, and prayed to our Lady to pray for my Christian father's soul, and then, with our pretty Colombe, I got here at last."

"You are a dear good boy," said Reginald, "and will, I hope, in the time to come, be the happy instrument of bringing many souls to the Church of God. The favor it

has pleased Almighty God to give you in sending you so unexpectedly to baptize your dying father, is, I trust, but the pledge of your future labors in the holy cause."

"You mean that I shall be a Black Robe," said Joseph; "I am sure you do; you have said as much before."

"There is nothing impossible to God," was the reply.

"Then I will pray more and more."

"And so must I, Joseph," said Reginald. "But I feel so much better, I will try to go with you and help you to bury your poor father."

Joseph gave a look of gratitude, and the two friends, although Reginald was not altogether free from pain, set out for the spot, where Joseph had covered his dead father with leaves, and, with what rude instruments were at their disposal, at length succeeded in effecting their charitable purpose, and committed the body of the Indian chief to the earth, their hearts overflowing with gratitude for the Divine Mercy so wonderfully shown to him. Having completed their pious duty, the two friends



returned home, and Reginald, in a few days, happily recovered from the effects of his late accident.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

**T**IME went on, but still no ship visited the island. All things, however, went on well with its few inhabitants. Their yams, bread fruit trees, Indian corn, and vines, were flourishing in a high degree of perfection. They had abundance of milk, having brought home another family of young goats to the great dissatisfaction of their little old friends.

One day in the summer of the succeeding year, Joseph being, so far as Reginald could guess, in his fourteenth year, the two friends were returning by the seaside from their woodland church earnestly engaged in conversation on the glories of Mary, when Reginald suddenly exclaimed, "Look yonder, Joseph! look yonder! surely there is a ship! the Mother of Mercy has heard our prayers!"

Joseph looked in the direction pointed out by his friend, and saw far off in the distance something rising on the bosom of the ocean, from which neither he nor Reginald could turn their strained eyes, till, as it advanced nearer and nearer, both were satisfied to their inexpressible joy, that it was indeed a ship, evidently bound for the island. It is needless to say that neither left the shore; there they stood long and silently watching the vessel's approach. Joseph at length broke silence.

Now, if there is a Black Robe on board, we shall have the bright garments, and the lights, and the smoke and—”

“It is very possible,” said Reginald, interrupting him, “I can now discern her colors: she is a Spanish vessel.”

Reginald was right, and when the ship neared the land sufficiently to enable them to distinguish the persons on board, a shout of triumphant exultation burst from the lips of the Indian boy, and, in the next instant, he exclaimed, “See, see; just look yonder; is not that a Black Robe?”

“You must moderate your impatience,



my little friend," said Reginald, smiling at the boy's impetuosity.

"But I want to know at once, if I am right," quickly replied the boy. "Do now only look there and tell me if you do not see a Black Robe?"

"If I can see clearly, I think you are not mistaken, for I can perceive the wings of his robe gently waving in the breeze."

They waited a little longer, and at length their patience was rewarded. The vessel continued to approach the shore, and eventually anchored at a short distance from the island, to which a boat's crew, having with them the long wished-for Black Robe, the captain, and Agnes with her husband and brothers, put off without delay. The light-hearted mariners sang, as they gaily plied their oars:

"Ave Maris Stella,  
Dei Mater Alma,  
Atque Semper Virgo,  
Felix Cœli Porta."

As soon as the boat had reached the shore, Reginald and Joseph hastened to welcome their long expected visitors. But what words can describe his surprise and

joy when Joseph at once recognized in the venerable missionary, the aged father who had baptized his mother. The recognition was mutual, for Joseph's was not a face to be easily forgotten; but amidst their congratulations, his tears flowed in abundance, while his sensitive heart recalled to mind his mother's fate, and the subsequent baptism of his dying father, by the almost miraculous instrumentality of his own filial piety.

It was sometime before he could withdraw his eyes from Father de Tracy, for he indeed it was, who had (in consequence of communications received from Father Mowbray) obtained permission to seek his nephew on the Green Island, and, if circumstances should render it expedient, he was at liberty to remain there until the arrival of a Father who could continue to reside there. There were many passengers on board, whose intention it was to settle on the island, if they found it likely, with proper cultivation, to afford subsistence for themselves and families.

The sound of approaching voices at length startled Joseph, he look around, and,



in the same instant, his eyes encountered those of his kind nurse, Agnes, who was gazing upon him with a look of maternal tenderness, fondly expecting the moment of recognition by the dear child of her martyred mistress. Brief, indeed, was her suspense, for uttering a loud wild cry of joy, Joseph rushed to her arms; and laughed and wept alternately, at one time rejoicing at their unexpected meeting, and the next moment deploring the fate of his dear mother.

The captain, in the meantime, had handed a letter to Reginald. It was from the owner of the vessel, to whom Father Mowbray had found an opportunity of communicating intelligence of the abode of Reginald and Joseph upon the island. The kind-hearted merchant had, therefore, sent out the vessel for the express purpose of conveying Reginald and his companion to Lima, where he would be happy to receive them as guests, till they were able to make arrangements for the future, adding, that the ship would remain for some days at the island to allow those who came thither on speculation, time to decide what course they would finally adopt.

The meeting of Reginald with his uncle was joyful in the extreme. They had never seen each other till that moment, but Reginald at once recognized the perfect resemblance of the aged priest, to the portrait on which he had so often gazed in childhood, although the raven locks that had shaded his temples were now become white as snow, and Father de Tracy's penetrating eyes, in his turn, had traced on Reginald's young brow, with all the sympathy of kindred affection, the well remembered lineaments of his beloved brother, and both uncle and nephew poured forth the warm effusions of their grateful hearts, in thanksgiving to God for the happiness they experienced. Neither was the Mother of Mercy forgotten, to whose powerful advocacy they felt indebted for all the blessings they received.

Reginald's next care was to invite his new friends to visit his habitation, an invitation that was cheerfully accepted. With his uncle and the captain, followed by the sailors, he led the way to his abode, whither Joseph with Agnes and her husband had gone before, and where much confusion



amongst the household prevailed in consequence. When Reginald with his company arrived the confusion was redoubled; Colombe alone, with her usual prudence, wisely maintaining her self-possession. Having just fluttered about a little, she took her customary place upon Reginald's shoulder, while the pretty little robins imitating her good example, kept chirping and peeping through the leaves at the strangers, whose presence had so unseasonably disturbed their harmony.

The sailors brought with them an ample supply of wine and provisions, and the happy party partook of a hearty meal; during which the rest of the family, though somewhat timidly, the poor old tortoise included, did not fail to make their appearance to the no small entertainment of the company. Dinner being over, the captain proposed returning to the ship, inviting Reginald and Joseph to accompany them on board.

Reginald, for himself and Joseph, declined the invitation for that time, lamenting that he had not then the means of accommodating Father de Tracey, for whose abode

upon the island he was most anxious to provide.

"Leave that to me," said the captain, good humoredly, "I will take it upon myself to provide all that is necessary, as soon as we can build him a house. He will see you every day in the meantime, and, before we set sail, we shall see him with a nice little congregation around him."

The good captain's suggestion was universally applauded, and Reginald proposed a visit to his little church in the wood before his friends returned to the boat, as it was but a short distance from that part of the shore, where the boat lay.

The proposal was agreeable to all, and their astonishment when contemplating the unpretending little structure, with its altar, crucifix, and other ornaments, cannot easily be described. One and all, they knelt before the altar, and accompanied Father de Tracy in his evening devotions, their hearts overflowing with love to God, and gratitude to the glorious Mother of God for the favors obtained by her intercession.

Having concluded their devotions, they



were leaving the church, when Joseph rushed forward and caught Father de Tracy's hand, exclaiming, "I want to see you wear the robes with the gold flowers and the lights, and—and—"

"I understand you, my child," said the good father. And if it shall please heaven to bless my intention, I will celebrate Mass here to-morrow.

Every face beamed with satisfaction, and they separated joyfully for the night, the captain and his company returning to their boat, while Reginald and Joseph took their homeward way.

Joseph was awake early the next morning, and his young ideas were busily engaged on things of no light import. In vain he tried to sleep again, his mind and his heart were too intently fixed upon one all-absorbing expectation. "I wish Reginald was awake," he murmured; but, notwithstanding the familiar terms on which they lived together, there was a feeling of respect mingled with the friendship he cherished for his benefactor, that rendered him unwilling to disturb his repose at so early an hour. A

lucky expedient, however, presented itself to his imagination, and he speedily adopted it. Poor Colombe, fast asleep with her head comfortably lodged under her wing, was perched quietly over Reginald's head, and, without one conscientious scruple at the unkindness of disturbing *her* repose at so early an hour, Joseph suddenly startled her from the tranquil slumber in which her faculties were so calmly wrapt. The gentle bird was of course alarmed, but seeing no one near of whom she had any cause to be in fear, after a flutter or two, contented herself with cooing loudly to indicate her displeasure at the indecorum of which Joseph had been guilty.

The stratagem was crowned with the desired success, Reginald was soon awakened from the sweetest sleep that had visited his pillow since his arrival on the island. He at first thought that some mischief had happened to his dear little Colombe, and started up to discover the cause, when, perceiving no appearance of danger near her, his eyes fell upon the young Indian, who met his gaze with a countenance half glad and half



fearful. Joseph was too noble-minded to think of hiding his fault, though he would willingly have avoided the mortification to which the acknowledgment would subject him.

“What has happened to disturb us so early?” inquired Reginald, somewhat quickly. “Have you been dreaming that a canoe full of your countrymen had landed on the island to dispute with us for its possession?”

“I dreamt nothing,” said the young Indian, somewhat proudly.

“And what, then, has alarmed us?” demanded Reginald.

“Why, then, if you must know, I could not sleep, I had so much to think of, and I tried again, and again, and I wanted to speak all my thoughts; I did not like to awaken you myself, for fear you would be angry, and so I awakened our Colombe, and set her cooing as loud as she could, and so—”

“And so,” said Reginald who could not avoid laughing at Joseph’s confession, “you have for once in your life acted a very selfish part towards your quiet neighbors,

for your own gratification; here is poor harmless Colombe at a loss to know what has caused all this disturbance, and if she awakens the other members of our household, we shall never be able to pacify them; however, you must not look so downcast, I can very well appreciate your feelings this morning. It is, I can see by the sun, about two hours earlier than our usual time of rising, but we will get ourselves in readiness now, and proceed at once to the church, where we may probably be joined by the venerable Father with our other friends, at an earlier hour than what we expect."

"How good! how good!" exclaimed the delighted Indian boy. "There now, you know all I thought and all I meant, I wanted to get to the church in time; and I wanted to make the altar very fine, and I wanted to gather fresh flowers, and I wanted to strew the leaves of some of them for a carpet, and I wanted—"

"Don't lose time, now, in telling me all you wanted to do," said Reginald, good-humoredly, "but get ready and come at once, and set about doing what is to be done."



Joseph's eyes brightened with joyful acquiescence, and they were soon ready to depart. Having first offered the sweet incense of their morning thanksgiving to Almighty God, and invoked the patronage of their dear Mother Mary, St. Joseph, and their guardian angels, they set out with cheerful hearts for their little church, the happy young Indian not forgetting to take little Colombe with him, which he did with a very good grace, cage and all; and, as he used more speed than Reginald, had fixed his treasure, and her habitation, securely on the bough of an olive tree, at a little distance from the church, before his friend reached the spot.

They did not come one moment too soon, for they found quite enough to do. Every obtrusive weed that had presumed to raise its offending head within the precincts, was carefully pulled up by the roots, while the pendant branches of the surrounding trees, that contributed to the strength and beauty of the little sanctuary, were tastefully festooned with variegated blossoms of every brilliant tint, and the sweetest flowers were

gathered and placed in fragrant abundance upon the altar; neither was the carpet forgotten, which, composed of Indian moss, spangled over with little white flowers, had a very pretty effect. When the indefatigable Joseph had done all he could, he wept that he could find no more to do; while Reginald, who could not but admire the zeal he showed in preparing for the long hoped for celebration of the first mass in the Green Island, observed with a smile:

“I must acknowledge you were in the right after all, my good Joseph. If we had all our work to do when Father de Tracy comes, it would be very far in the day before we could have the happiness of hearing mass,”

“But the lights! The lights!” suddenly exclaimed Joseph, as the recollection rushed upon him. “And, and where shall we—”


“Be calm, my young friend,” said Reginald, meekly, “Father de Tracy will come provided with all that is necessary for the due celebration of the Holy Sacrifice. Let us say the Holy Rosary in the meantime, I doubt not but the good Father will be here



before we have finished it.” Whilst they repeated the decades, the little parrots in the bushes, who were well acquainted with the familiar sounds, every now and then distinctly responded, “Hail Mary!” and, as Reginald had anticipated, they had not concluded the last Gloria, when they heard approaching footsteps, and the next moment they beheld the venerable Father de Tracy, carrying a case that contained the holy vessels. The captain’s son, a youth about sixteen, and two sailors, followed, with boxes containing candles, candlesticks, Missal, vestments, and everything necessary for the celebration of the Sacred Mysteries, at which the captain, and as many of the seamen as could be spared from the vessel, also came to assist.



## CHAPTER XVII.

PERCEIVE, my children," said Father de Tracy, looking at Reginald and Joseph, "that you have not been unmindful of the expected coming of that God who will this day descend from his Throne of Everlasting Glory to visit us upon this humble altar, which your piety," he continued, directing his discourse to Reginald, "has raised to His honor in this wilderness, and which both," he went on, looking kindly on the Indian youth, "have so tastefully onamented for this solemn occasion."

Father de Tracy paused and the ever-watchful Joseph took instant advantage of the opportunity his silence afforded to give vent to his anxiety that nothing should be wanting.

"But, the bright shining lights, Father, like so many stars sparkling all around. If we only had them now, I could soon get fire, and then we should see them as I did once in my own island."



to each other. Judge, then, how great was my surprise, when I found he was the son of Philip Stanley, the friend and neighbor of my youthful years, and that you, my dear nephew, had been on board the same vessel with him, but he could not tell whether you had escaped or perished in the storm. He invited me to accompany him to his habitation, which was near at hand, that he might relate at large the sad fate of the Antelope and her unfortunate crew, his own preservation, and what had subsequently befallen him.

“ ‘You will,’ said he, ‘have ample time to return to your vessel nearly two hours before sunset. This island is inhabited, but the people are not numerous, and could you remain here, they would hail with delight the sojourn of a missionary upon the island.’ Without making him any reply, I accompanied him home, and was soon comfortably seated, with Hubert and the old Indian, whose daughter, a young and handsome maiden, the affianced bride of Hubert, spread before me a plentiful supply of bread, fruit, and milk, and having made a slight repast,



I reminded Hubert of his promised narrative. He at once commenced, beginning at the time when he embarked with you on board the *Antelope*, on her homeward bound voyage to England. Proceeding with his relation, he came to that fearful moment of unutterable horror when the doomed ship was rocking over the abyss in which she was so shortly to be engulfed forever; with the particulars of that sad catastrophe, however, you are but too well acquainted. I shall therefore proceed to relate, as nearly as possible in Hubert's own words, what followed upon that moment of terror and dismay, when, in the agony of despair, he called upon her to whom no one ever had recourse in vain.

“‘My cry for mercy was scarcely uttered, when the waves, with tremendous force, bore me away from the sinking vessel and the voracious jaws of the monster of the deep. I could not speak, my eyes grew dim, the waves washed over me, and I knew no more, How long I remained insensible, I cannot tell. But the first words I uttered when returning animation once more recalled me



to a sense of my situation, were, 'Mother of Mercy, I live, I have not called upon thee in vain.' With these words still trembling on my lips, I looked around and found myself on the seashore, this friendly Indian and his daughter bending over me, and anxiously watching the symptoms of returning animation, which they hailed with the warmest expressions of satisfaction and joy.

" 'Fear not,' said he, in English, 'I am not the foe of your nation, you are safe; and I will at once explain what you cannot now understand.

" 'The morning rose fair and bright after the desolating storm that raged yesterday, and I bent my way to the beach to seek my canoe, which had been washed from the place where I had left her the preceding day. I had to walk a considerable distance before I discovered the place where she lay, overturned by the force of the winds and waves. Close beside her, pale, cold, and apparently dead, amidst the sea-weed on the beach, I beheld your inanimate form; assisted by my daughter, who had accompanied me, I succeeded in removing you, and in recalling



your dormant senses once more to recollection and life.'

"'I was still very weak, yet I strove to express my gratitude, but was prevented by the Indian, who forbade the exertion, proposing at the same time to assist me to his dwelling where my clothes could be dried, while I reposed on his mat.

"'I suffered him and his daughter to lead me to their wigwam, where I received from both the kindest treatment, and, having shared their homely fare, I lay down on the mat, whilst the daughter took upon herself the task of drying my clothes.

"'I arose the next morning without feeling any ill effects from the hardships I had so recently endured, but I was listless and unhappy, notwithstanding my miraculous preservation. My misery increased, while memory recalled the sad events I had so lately witnessed, presenting to my scared imagination the sinking vessel, the sailors washed one by one from the deck; myself the sole survivor of the crew, and Reginald, the friend and companion of my youth. Mother of Mercy! I exclaimed, is Reginald de Tracy no more!



“ ‘Compose yourself, young man,’ said the Indian gravely; ‘leave these painful uncertainties to the all-wise dispensations of the Divine Will, and to her maternal care who is never invoked in vain. Be not surprised to hear me speak thus, Mariana my daughter, and I, are both Christians. One of the Fathers, who visited this island, taught me the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, and, finding that Almighty God had given me grace to believe the holy things he told me, and that I had great veneration for the Blessed Mother of God, and was very desirous to become a Christian, he baptized me to my exceeding great joy. The good Father remained here for some years; he was a native of England, and it was from him I acquired sufficient knowlege of the language of his country, to be now able to converse with you. During the Father’s stay upon the island, I married the daughter of a Spaniard, who had lived here for some years. The marriage ceremony was performed by the good Father, and he was recalled to Lima about two years after, but he baptized Mariana before he left the island. Now,



that you know you are with friends and fellow Christians, resign yourself to the Divine Will, and wait with patience for the future.' I endeavored to profit by his advice, and, as my strength returned, I accompanied him when he went hunting or fishing, and occasionally assisted him in the cultivation of the ground around his wigwam.'

"Here ended Hubert's relation, to which I listened with infinite satisfaction, and, as it was getting late, he and the Indian accompanied me to the ship, which I found would remain two days longer at the island. I availed myself of this to celebrate Holy Mass in a little deserted church there was upon the island, to the great joy of the few inhabitants. In compliance with their earnest request, the marriage of Hubert and Mariana was solemnized before my departure from the island."

Reginald's joy was too great for expression at the happy solution of the mystery, in which the fate of his earliest friend had so long remained enveloped. For the remainder of the day he could speak of nothing but Hubert's repentance, and the clemency and compassion of the Mother of God.



## CHAPTER XIX.

**F**ATHER de Tracy said Mass daily in the little church, while the ship remained at the island, to the inexpressible joy of Reginald and Joseph; and the gratitude of Joseph may well be imagined, when he was allowed to assist Reginald in serving Mass.

But there was another long wished for blessing still wanting to consummate their happiness. Their prayers had not been unheard, the Mother of Mercy had presented their petitions to her Divine Son, and the happy day at length arrived when Reginald and Joseph received the Holy Communion from the hands of the venerable Father de Tracy. Years had passed since Reginald had partaken of the Heavenly Banquet, but his confidence in the Divine goodness was thus happily rewarded.

And Joseph, the child of the wild forest, whom Heaven had endowed with intellectual powers of no inferior order, during his preparation for the great event, showed a

capacity far beyond what might have been expected from his years. With how firm a faith, and with what inexpressible delight, kneeling by Reginald's side in silent adoration, he reverently received the Bread of Life. A beam of celestial joy brightened on his young brow, when rising from his knees he returned with Reginald to his place, their hearts throbbing with gratitude and love.

Reginald now spent the greater part of his time in preparing for their departure from the island. Agnes and her husband would gladly have kept Joseph with them, but neither Father de Tracy nor Reginald would consent to leave him behind.

It was not without a certain degree of affectionate regret, as the day for their departure drew near, that Reginald and Joseph visited the little church, which the one had constructed with so much care, and the other had been used to decorate with so much loving taste.

Their garden, too, which they had cultivated with so much labor, caused them a few silent tears; but they felt more than anything else the separation from the pretty



little robins and the other tame birds, and they patted the heads of the poor little unconscious goats and commended them, with the old tortoise, to the charitable care of Agnes and her husband.

“But Colombe, our Colombe, who found me in the woods!” said Joseph. “You do not mean to leave her behind; I will carry her myself all the way first. I told Father de Tracy all about her, and he smiled and said she might come.”

“It is far from being my intention,” replied Reginald, “to leave her behind, who, like myself, was preserved from perishing in the storm; and I have no fear that wherever it may please God we should take up our abode, poor little Colombe will be denied admittance.”

Joseph was satisfied, and his next care was to see if her cage wanted any repairs, and finding the door was somewhat out of order, he made up his mind to set about putting it to rights without delay; another thought, however, struck him at the moment, and for the present the cage remained undisturbed.

The next day the ship was in sight, on board of which was the Father who was to remain on the island; and Joseph knew that, in two days after the Father's arrival, the ship that had brought Father de Tracy, would sail with himself and Reginald. He had, then, no time to lose, for his soul was intent on the performance of one sad duty, which his young heart felt was a testimony of filial regard for the memory of his repentant and baptized father.

He led Agnes and her husband to his father's grave, which he had marked with a cross composed of colored pebbles, shells, and flowers collected by his own hands.

"He lies here," he said, looking sorrowfully at Agnes. "I found him dying in the wood. But he died a Christian; I baptized him myself; I taught him to call upon Jesus and Mary, and he died praying. I know God has forgiven him, and you must not think any more of the Indian chief who smote my mother, but of my Christian father, whose immortal soul is with the great good God."

Agnes could not refrain from tears, and,



with her husband and Joseph, kneeling on the poor Indian's last resting place, offered up grateful thanksgivings to Almighty God and His Blessed Mother, for the conversion of the wild Indian chief, and repeated a "De Profundis" for his everlasting rest.

Their devotions ended, they rose from their knees, when the affectionate boy planted some flower roots, he had brought with him, upon the mossy earth, that covered the remains of the once fierce, but repentent, American warrior.

"It may be," said the youth, "that in years to come I may again visit this place. But promise me," he continued, addressing Agnes and her husband with mournful emphasis, "promise me that you will sometimes come here, and pray, and watch, and tend the flowers I have planted with my own hand."

The promise was cordially given, and they returned together to the habitation, where Reginald, with his venerable uncle, was expecting their return.

The brig, with the expected Father on board, had safely arrived at the island during their absence.



Reginald and Joseph had now much business upon their hands; Joseph remembered he had got Colombe's cage to mend, and set to work at once, but was called away before his task was completed, and the consequence was that he forgot it altogether. Colombe, however, was never at a loss for a bough to rest upon.

The next day was rather a day of sadness, for Reginald and Joseph were to embark for Lima the following morning; rejoiced as they indeed were, they could not, without a pang, tear themselves away from the familiar associations which surrounded them.

And the hoped for, yet dreaded morrow, came. Agnes, with her husband, watched their embarkation, and remained on the beach as long as the ship was in sight.

Soon after Reginald had lost sight of his island home, a recollection flashed upon his mind, that brought with it no small share of uneasiness; in their haste Colombe had been forgotten.

"Poor Colombe!" he exclaimed. "Joseph, we have forgotten her!"

The Indian boy started up, his eyes filled



with tears, looking as if he would spring into the sea and swim back for her.

Colombe, however, was perfectly safe, for if her friends in their hurry had forgotten her, she had by no means forgotten them, and, like a discreet bird, (which she certainly was) seeing how things were going on, and not finding her cage where it usually hung, she had lost no time in winging her way after Reginald and Joseph to the shore, and the moment after Reginald uttered her name, the faithful dove, who was quietly perched in the rigging just over his head, flew down and alighted on his arm, cooing sweetly and joyfully to testify her happiness and the confidence she reposed in his affection. Reginald and Joseph loaded her with caresses, and a few moments had sufficed to make them contented and happy.

The voyage to Lima proved a prosperous one. Blessed by Heaven with favoring gales, they reached that port in safety; and Father de Tracy, with his companions, Reginald, Joseph, and Colombe, proceeded to the hospitable mansion of the generous merchant before referred to, where



they remained till arrangements were made for their admission into a house belonging to the Society of Jesus. When they removed thither, Colombe was not left behind, and the gentle bird passed the remainder of her well spent life in security and peace.

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### CONCLUSION.

**T**WELVE years had passed away. Eustace and Gertrude had received a letter from Reginald, conveying the glad tidings of his safety and his abode in the religious house, soliciting their prayers, and concluding with a hope that, if it pleased Heaven, he might yet have the happiness of seeing them again. Philip and Mildred Stanley also had heard from their long absent son, and received a promise that, if all things went on well, he would visit England soon.

Three more years elapsed, and then came the long delayed, long expected hour, when Eustace and Gertrude de Tracy were blessed by heaven with the happiness of



beholding again their long lost and beloved son, now Father Reginald de Tracy. He was accompanied by Hubert Stanley, and the parents of both were once more made happy.

Father Reginald de Tracy remained in England for some months, when arrangements were made that Eustace and Gertrude should return with him to Lima, where (their means being sufficient for their maintenance,) they could pass the remainder of their lives in content and happiness.

Philip Stanley and his wife, satisfied with having once more seen their son, felt no wish for a long sea voyage, and saw him embark with Father Reginald and his family, cheering themselves with the hope of his future return. When the ship was no longer in sight, they returned contentedly to their home, to pass the remainder of their days in relating and talking over to their friends and neighbors the adventures and hair-breadth escapes of their son, which they did not fail to magnify from every point of view, to the utmost of their power. It is but just, however, to say that they never forgot the



debt of gratitude they owed to God and His glorious Mother.

The once little Indian boy Joseph, now a fine intelligent young man, was performing his novitiate in the house to which his friend Father Reginald belonged, and he was amongst the first to congratulate him on his return from England, and on the safe arrival of his venerable parents in the New World. After a residence of some years of unruffled tranquility, the latter resigned their souls into the hands of their Creator, and it was no small consolation in their dying moments, that from Father Reginald they received the last rites of Holy Church. Their departure was happy and peaceful, "Jesus, Mary, and Joseph," they sighed with their latest breath.

Time rolled on—Father Reginald de Tracy was advanced in years, when one day an old man, accompanied by three youths, arrived at the gate of the house, and requested to see the Father Rector, at that time none other than Reginald himself, to whose presence they were immediately conducted. He at once recognized in the eldest of the visitors, his old friend, Hubert Stanley.



The object of his unexpected visit was soon explained. His wife Mariana was dead. She had left him three sons who had profited so well under the care and instruction of the good Black Robe stationed on their island, that they had obtained their father's consent to their wishes, and he was come to offer them to the Society of Jesus, stipulating only for himself, that he might be admitted as an humble lay-brother of the community. His petition was granted, and the evening of his life was passed in tranquility and peace.

When any temptation assailed him, or any spiritual danger threatened, one prayer rose most constantly to his lips. It was that which had once before stood him in good stead at his utmost need—"Mother of Mercy, help."



LBMr'24

















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